The UN Decade of Healthy Aging and the role of Civil Society

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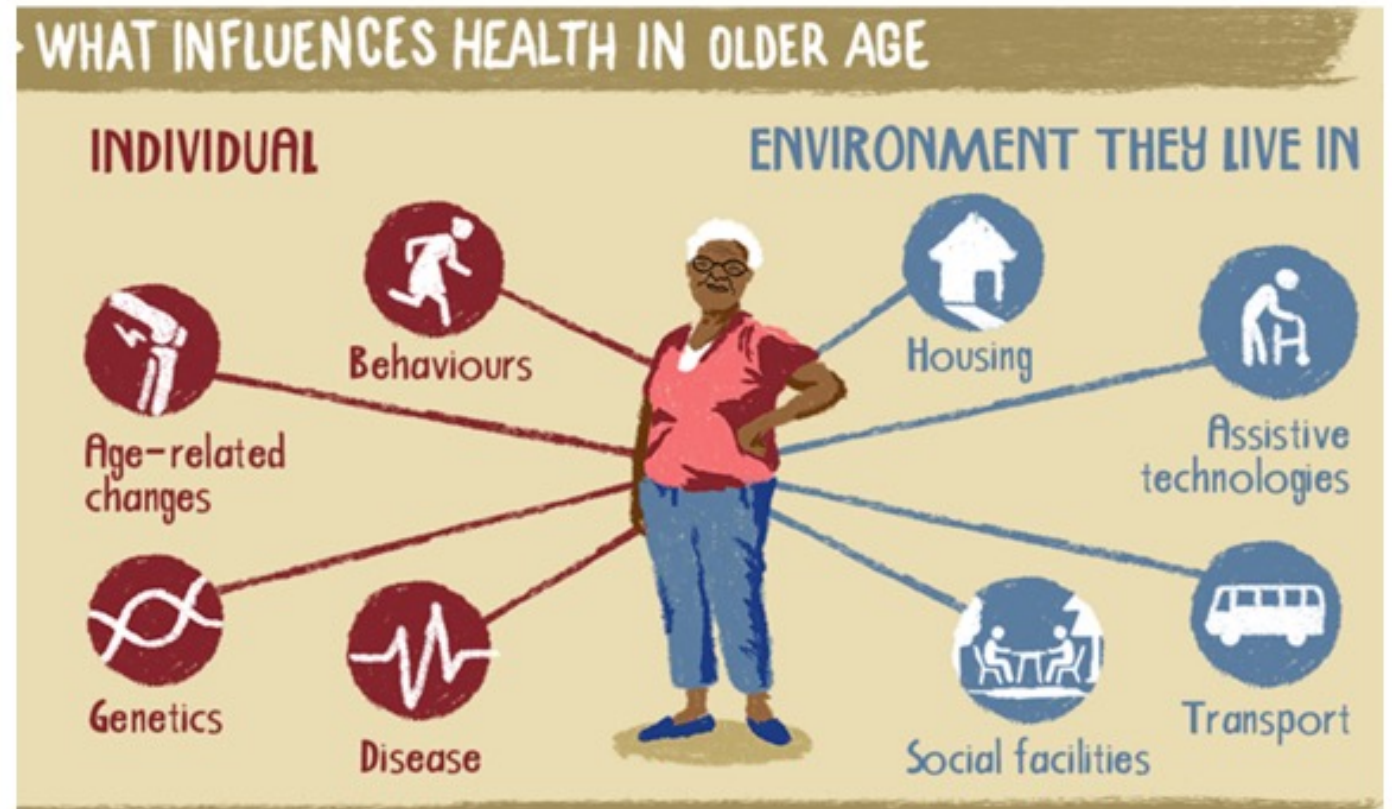Country Director, HAI-Ethiopia
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Healthy ageing

- Is about everyone, everywhere being able to enjoy wellbeing, dignity, and right to health, to live independently, and to participate at all ages.

- Maintaining Functional Ability that enables wellbeing of Ops.

- Healthy ageing is influenced by our physical and mental abilities, the environments in which we live, and how these interact.

Healthy aging is influenced by interaction between individual, environmental and physical factors

WHAT INFLUENCES HEALTH IN OLDER AGE

INDIVIDUAL

Behaviours

Age-related changes

Genetics

Disease

ENVIRONMENT THEY LIVE IN

Housing

Assistive technologies

Social facilities

Transport

What is the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing?

- The United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030) is a global collaboration, aligned with the last ten years of the SDGs.

- Decade is the current leading strategy to achieve and support actions to address the challenges of population aging and ensure sustainable development

- Brings together governments, civil society, international agencies, professionals, academia, the media, and the private sector to improve the lives of older people, their families, and the communities in which they live.

Why a Decade of Healthy Ageing?

- **>1 billion** people aged 60 years or older.

- Many do not have access to even the **basic resources** necessary for a life of meaning and of dignity.

- The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the seriousness of existing **gaps in policies, systems and services.**

- A decade of **concerted global action** on healthy ageing is urgently needed to ensure that older people can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment.

Decade Action Areas- 4 areas for action

- Fighting Ageism -Changing how we think, feel and act towards age and ageing

- Age Friendly Environment -Developing communities in ways that foster the abilities of older people.e.g. Removing physical and social barriers and implementing policies, systems, services, products and technologies

- Integrated Care -Delivering person-centred integrated care and primary health services   responsive to older people.e.g. prevention; promotion; curative, rehabilitative, palliative and end-of-life care without financial hardship

- Long-term Care-Providing older people who need it with access to long-term care. E.g. rehabilitation, assistive technologies and supportive, inclusive environments

What role can Civil Society play?

- All stakeholders must engage to promote the Four Action Areas

- Concerted, catalytic, sustained collaboration

- Older people themselves must be at the centre of all development and humanitarian initiatives.

- Shifting from Economic Growth model to Right based Model.

- Influencing Donors to fund OP initiatives.

Connecting Stakeholders(CSO) together

- Jointly Standing up against Ageism and harnessing the Voice of older people . E.g. Forming coalitions,networks,task force

- Using various advocacy tools. E.g. Narrative change,Mass mobilization, Community Education, policy research and advocacy/influence

- Leveraging resources, knowledge sharing, policy influence.

- Creating intergenerational education and conversation platforms.

Leadership and capacity building

- Fostering healthy ageing and reducing inequity require effective governance and leadership to develop appropriate laws, policies, national frameworks, financial resources.

- Capacity building can support different stakeholders to develop the relevant competences and ensure that older people experience health and well-being and enjoy their human rights.

Strengthening research, data, and innovation

- Data must be disaggregated to better understand issues affecting OP health and wellbeing.E.g. SADD,The framework Institute, HAI

- Strengthening research and data helps inform and drive action at national and local level. E.g.Global AgeWatch Index,Insights on Aging,OPA and Healthcare,COVID RNA(https://www.helpage.org/resources/publications/)

- Innovative Approach. E.g. HA Global network,ADA,OCMG,Ageism at work

Health System Strengthening

- Aligning Health Systems to the needs of older persons

- Support Supply chain.Eg NCD,Vaccine,essential Medicine

- Health workforce development and institutional capacity

- Guidelines and tools for primary care providers

- Strengthen Referral and linkage.e.g. CV

Progress in Africa

- Development of a Health Ageing Framework for Africa and ECOWAS
- Government with or working on healthy Ageing strategies and piloting ICOPE –Mozambique, Kenya, Zimbabwe
- CSO – working on voice and ageism, technical assistance
- Main Challenge is lack of sustained coordination mechanism
- As a recommendation integration initiatives need actions at macro-levels (legislation, funding), at meso-levels (age-friendly environment) and at micro-clinical levels

Resources

- HelpAge Healthy ageing work - https://www.helpage.org/what-we-do/healthy-ageing

- Join the UN Decade for Healthy Ageing Platform – share learning, be connected to incountry engagement and funding (UN Decade of Healthy Ageing - The Platform)

Thank you

Q and A