

# ***Vulnerable Groups in the Caribbean – “Older Persons”***

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# ***Demographic Trends***

- **Over 3.6 million (9.2%) people aged 60 + years in the Caribbean (PAHO, 1998)**
- **7.4 million (17.3%) people aged 60+ years projected in 2025 in the Caribbean**
- **143,000 (11%) of total population of T&T aged 60 years and over as at 2006 (*UN World Population Ageing, 2006*)**

# ***Caribbean Interest on Ageing***

- **Int'l Conference on Population & Development**
- **Madrid Int'l Plan of Action on Ageing (2002)**
- **Regional Strategy for Implementation (2003)**
- **Caribbean Symposium on Ageing (2004)**

# ***Impact of Ageing on the Caribbean***

- **Disparities in demographic transition**
- **Improved general health and living conditions**
- **Socio-economic challenges**
- **Opportunities for investments in social protection plans and pension schemes for working age population**

# ***Older Persons and Development (Challenges)***

- **Need for intergenerational links with CBOs, FBOs and cultural groups to national bodies and institutions**
- **Elders under-utilized as guides & resource-persons in formal/informal settings**
- **Protection of human rights of elders and the creation of conditions for economic and social security**

# ***Older Persons and Development (Challenges)***

- **Need for opportunities to gain income and secure social protection**
- **Inequities in pensions and social welfare schemes due to gender and former employment status**
- **Women as de facto caregivers are disadvantaged in access to formal labor**

# ***Older Persons and Development (Opportunities)***

- Provide framework for “society for all ages” through collaboration of key stakeholders
- Enhance the role of the elderly as social & cultural mentors involving the young and old
- Create sustainable employment opportunities for older persons to secure incomes

# ***Older Persons and Development (Opportunities)***

- **Establish non-contributory pension schemes indexed to cost-of-living for informal sector**
- **Overcome bureaucratic hurdles to make pensions more accessible to those who are entitled**
- **Increase allocations in the national budget to programmes supporting the elderly**



# ***Advancing Health and Well-Being (Challenges)***

- **Impact of chronic non-communicable diseases & demand for long-term care**
- **More training on ageing and geriatrics for healthcare providers & family members**
- **Impact of migration of trained healthcare professionals on care for the elderly**

# ***Advancing Health and Well-Being (Challenges)***

- **Need to enhance community care & outreach to rural and outlying areas**
- **More affordable & accessible healthcare and medication for chronic diseases required**
- **Prevalence of HIV/AIDS among older persons on the rise**

# ***Advancing Health and Well-Being (Opportunities)***

- **Promote healthy lifestyles at all levels of society through schools & radio/TV networks**
- **Enhance training in geriatric care for family members, care providers & healthcare workers**
- **Regulatory framework by Governments to ensure quality standards of care for elderly are provided in public/private care facilities**

# ***Advancing Health and Well-Being (Opportunities)***

- **Promote the inclusion of HIV/AIDS prevention & treatment into healthcare programmes**
- **Improve working conditions, benefits packages & career perspectives for healthcare providers to stem migration**

# ***Advancing Health and Well-Being (Opportunities)***

- **Strengthen community healthcare services and/or utilize available mobile care facilities to facilitate elderly in remote areas**
- **Identify mechanisms to ensure equal access to healthcare services including special treatments/medications to poor & vulnerable older persons**

# ***Enabling and Supportive Environments (Challenges)***

- **Prevention of discrimination and elder abuse in physical, psychological & cultural terms**
- **Grandparents burdened with additional family responsibilities due to migration**
- **Inclusion of the elderly in disaster preparedness and mitigation plans**

# ***Enabling and Supportive Environments (Challenges)***

- Access to support needed to upgrade their accommodations
- Public spaces to provide accessibility for older persons particularly those with disabilities
- Men in older age often excluded from informal social networks in post-retirement years

# ***Enabling and Supportive Environments (Opportunities)***

- **Promote initiatives for older persons to acquire affordable property or access support**
- **Improve access to public buildings and affordable public transportation**
- **Include elderly & disabled in national and regional disaster preparedness and mitigation plans**



# ***Enabling and Supportive Environments (Opportunities)***

- **Provide legislation to combat various forms of violence, abuse, neglect of the elderly**
- **Promote the inclusion of older persons into all aspects of social and political life in region**
- **Promote formation and maintenance of informal networks for elderly men and women**

# ***Enabling and Supportive Environments (Opportunities)***

- **Promote the establishment of mechanisms to assist the elderly in care-taker roles, borne out of the impact of migration**
- **Need to streamline social policies and programmes and share best practices across the region in the context of the Caribbean Single Market & Economy**

# ***Strategies implemented in T&T***

- **Establishment of Division of Ageing (2003)**
- **Continuum of Health & Social Support Services for Older Persons (2004)**
- **Co-hosting Caribbean Ageing Symposium in Trinidad (2004)**

## ***Strategies in T&T (cont'd)***

- **Establishment of Older Persons Information Centre (Help Desk) in 2005**
- **Annual Public Forum for Older Persons launched in 2006**
- **Establishment of (7) Senior Activity Centres in 2006/2007**

# ***Strategies in T&T (cont'd)***

- **National Policy on Ageing (and Action Plan) launched in 2007**
- **Homes for Older Persons Act No. 20 of 2007 assented to & awaiting proclamation**
- **Retirement Programme for Public Officers developed in 2008**

## ***Strategies of T&T (cont'd)***

- **Annual Commemoration of Int'l Day of Older Persons on October 1<sup>st</sup>**
- **Annual Commemoration of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on June 15**
- **Geriatric Adolescence Partnership Programme (GAPP) established in 1997**

## ***Strategies of T&T (cont'd)***

- **Chronic Disease Assistance Programme (CDAP) established in 2004**
- **Senior Citizens Grant (Pension) & Grants for house repairs; eye glasses; hearing aids; walking devices; rewiring of houses; home appliances**

## ***Strategies of T&T (cont'd)***

- **Decentralisation of the Social Services Delivery system**
- **Formulation of the National Plan of Action on Ageing – “Age-in-place: Building Age-Friendly Communities”**



***Thank You!***