AGING IN THE ARAB COUNTRIES: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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# Demographic achievements in the Arab world

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1975</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total fertility rate</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crude mortality rate per 1000</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life expectancy at birth</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>67.0</td>
<td>73.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage older than 65 y/o</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elderly population 65 y+ (millions)</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source*: Sibai AM, Kronfol N (2007). Situation analysis of population ageing in the Arab Countries: For UN-ESCWA
Percentage of population aged 65 years in Arab countries, 2005

Percentage of population aged 65 years in Arab countries, 2005-50

Challenges facing the older population in Arab countries

Levels of schooling attainment

» **Low** schooling level among older adults

» **Substantial variation** in schooling exists across Arab countries, these can range from as low as \(<1\) per cent in Yemen to a high 50 per cent in Jordan

» **High gender gap** in educational attainment
Challenges facing the older population in Arab countries

**Economic challenges**

» Because of the absence or pervasively small old-age pensions in Arab countries, the majority of older men continue to work after the legal age of retirement and much beyond (in Lebanon and Jordan 10-14% continue to work beyond age 80, Yemen 21%).

» The vast majority of Arab women work in the informal sector and are obliged to be totally dependent, if available, upon the income and work-related benefits of the male breadwinner or upon charity.
Challenges facing the older population in Arab countries

Social challenges

» Owing to higher LE among women, a higher proportion of older women than men end up living alone (1% in Bahrain to 17% in Lebanon)

» Disintegration of customary family support system

» Family members increasingly are no longer able to care for their frail elder family members, and those with the most severe disabilities.
Challenges facing the older population in Arab countries

Health challenges

» High levels of chronic non-communicable disease morbidity and mortality with the double burden of infectious diseases in certain countries

» With higher levels of co-morbidity among women than men
Suffering from at least one chronic condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>63.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>55.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>55.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>54.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>45.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>43.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yemen</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djibouti</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PAPFAM 2004-2008
An Agent for Exchange and Change

Aim:

The aim of the CSA is to create a hub for research, education, policy formulation, advocacy and training on aging in Lebanon and the region.
Translating Research into Policy and Practice (TRIPP)

Founding members:

Researchers and academicians, geriatricians, representatives from governmental and non-governmental, directors of older adults institutes and elderly homes and social workers.
The main pillars of the Centre’s strategic tools are:

1. **Research, database, networks, and conferences**
   - **Objective:** To raise awareness/advocacy of ageing issues

2. **Human resource development**
   - **Objective:** To promote good practice in the care of older people

3. **Optimizing opportunities in development plans and policies**
   - **Objective:** To promote active participation and mainstreaming of older people issues across all sectors
Activities so far

- Documentary evidence
- Data repository
- Conferences and roundtable debates
- Proceedings and policy briefs
  - Pensions: a right long overdue for the older citizens
  - Voices of the caregivers
  - Seniors in emergencies...

http://www.csa.org.lb/
Thank You