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**WORKSHOP ON**

**IMPROVING THE STATE OF ELDERLY IN OIC MEMBER STATES**

*24-25 April 2018, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia*

**Concept Note**

# Introduction

The world population has been undergoing a process of ageing, where the proportion of elderly is increasing and the share of youth is decreasing. While the rapid ageing process has been taking place for many decades in developed countries, it has only recently started in the developing countries including OIC Member States.

Even though OIC Member States, on average, still have a relatively young population when compared with developed countries, the share of elderly people has been on the rise along with improvements in healthcare systems, reduction in population growth, and increasing life expectancy. In OIC Member States, the share of senior citizens (aged 60 or over) in total population increased slightly from 5.8 per cent in 1990 to 6.4 per cent in 2010. Nevertheless, the UN projections for OIC Member States anticipate that this share will rapidly climb up from 6.4 per cent in 2010 to 9.6 per cent in 2030.

An ageing population has remarkable and wide-ranging socio-economic impacts, from increasing the pressure on social security systems to reducing labour force and changing moral and cultural values that necessitate OIC Member States to devise and implement policies and action plans that can mitigate negative consequences on the society, and develop and provide services for the well-being of elderly.

On the other hand, increased life expectancy can pose potential benefits for OIC Member States; elderly’s longer presence in society will provide greater opportunities for the rest of the population to benefit from their unique life and work skills and experiences. To reap these benefits, while mitigating negative impacts of an ageing population, however, OIC Member States would need to develop the right set of policies.

Senior citizens can best reflect their potentials and contribute development of their respective societies in existence of relevant institutional arrangements and regulations such as flexible working systems and effective healthcare systems, whereas the lack of such modalities/systems would lead the elderly population to stay inactive and disintegrated. In this context, development of right policies and making informed decisions at the policy level on the state of elderly would help unlocking the potentials of elderly people and enabling them to be active as well as productive members of their respective societies where they can also sustain their life in better conditions as recommended by Islamic teachings and the positive social and cultural norms.

It is worth to refer to the background and mandate as the Resolution no. 4/42C on Social and Family Issues, adopted by the 42nd Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) held on 27-28 May 2015 in Kuwait, requested the following:

* + - The establishment of the **Islamic Ministerial Conference on the Wellbeing and Social security of Elderly and People with Special Needs in the Muslim World** (This will be addressed in the context of the initiative to merge a number of sectorial ministerial conferences).

To coordinate with relevant OIC institutions to start by developing an OIC Policy on the Elderly, and an OIC Policy on People with Special Need (OPPSN).

The OIC is of the view to separate the two files, knowing that neither senior citizen would appreciate to be classified as “people with special needs”, nor people with special needs would accept to be considered as ageing people.

# Objectives of the Workshop

Given the increasing share of elderly people in OIC Member States and emerging challenges faced by these people in their socio-economic life, it has become critically important for OIC Member States to start taking population ageing seriously and develop policies, mechanisms and means that can address both the challenges and opportunities posed by ageing in Member States through a more systematic and coordinated approach.

To effectively identify common trends on population ageing, inquire key challenges faced by elderly people in OIC Member States, the OIC General Secretariat, in cooperation with SESRIC, will organize a Workshop on “Improving the State of Elderly in OIC Member States” with the participation of experts from the Member States as well as relevant OIC institutions and international organizations with a view to:

* Examining and discussing the recent trends in the state of elderly in OIC Member States in comparative perspective;
* Identifying the challenges, policies and practices, as well as opportunities for the elderly and highlighting their potential role in sustainable development of OIC Member States;
* Commending their role in disseminating moral values and the virtues of social solidarity and wisdoms. In additions to the need to inculcate historical knowledge of the world cultural heritage of the Islamic civilization through the OIC Institutions; and notably those working in the field of Youth;
* Exchanging and sharing knowledge, experiences and best practices and models for improving the well-being of elderly, and addressing their common challenges;
* Recommending and proposing concrete and feasible ways and means for enhancing intra-OIC cooperation in this domain;
* Reviewing the proposed “Recommendations for Possible Actions to Improve the State of Elderly” and collecting views and feedback of OIC Member States in this regard; and; aiming to initiate the draft OIC policy and program of action to be considered by the upcoming OIC Conference on Social/Development/Affairs to be held in Turkey in 2019.
* Facilitating networking among the participants, particularly for future cooperation and exchange of expertise.

# Methodology

The workshop will be organized over two days. In addition to the opening session in the first day and the closing session in the second day, the workshop will include five working sessions. During these working sessions, presentations and discussions will be held on the following sub-themes:

State of Elderly in OIC Member States;

Perspectives of International and Regional Organisations on Addressing Challenges Faced by Elderly;

National Practices of OIC Member States on Addressing Challenges Faced by Elderly; and

OIC institutions expertise and experiences regarding studies and researches on the matter;

Recommendations for Possible Actions to Improve the State of Elderly.

# Participants in the Workshop

The participants include representatives at expert senior level of the following bodies:

Relevant Ministries and/or State Councils, such as Ministries of Family, and Social Affairs in OIC Member States.

Relevant OIC institutions: OIC General Secretariat, SESRIC, IPHRC, IDB, ISESCO, ICYF-DC, ICCIA, ISSF, IUMS, IIFA...

Relevant regional and international institutions, such as UN, African Union and WHO.

# Time and Venue

The workshop will take place at the OIC General Secretariat headquarters in Jeddah and will be held over two days on 24-25 April 2018.

# Language

The workshop will proceed in the 3 OIC languages (English, Arabic and French). Simultaneous translation will be provided.

# Expected Outcomes of the Workshop

The expected outcomes of the workshop will be as follows:

Identifying and addressing major challenges, obstacles and constraints facing the elderly’s wellbeing in Member States;

Identifying and recommending concrete policies/ joint actions and measures at both the national and OIC cooperation levels for improvement of the state of elderly;

Identifying and recommending concrete policies/ joint actions and measures at both the national and OIC cooperation levels to scale-up contribution of the elderly to sustainable development of Member States; and

Getting feedback and comments of participants on the “Recommendations for Possible Actions to Improve the State of Elderly”.