



## UN World Social Report 2023

**For Prelims:** United Nations World Social Report 2023: Ageing Population, National Commission on Population, Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVVY), SAMPANN Project, SACRED Portal for Elderly, Decade of Healthy Aging.

**For Mains:** Status of Ageing Population in India, Problems Associated with the Ageing Population, Current Schemes Related to Old Age Population.

### Why in News?

According to the [United Nations \(UN\) World Social Report 2023: Leaving no one behind in an ageing world](#), the number of persons aged 65 years or older worldwide is expected to **double over the next three decades**.

### What are the Key Highlights of the Report?

- The elderly population will reach **1.6 billion in 2050**, accounting for more than **16% of the global population**.
- **North Africa, West Asia and sub-Saharan Africa** are expected to experience the fastest growth in the number of older people over the next three decades.
  - Also, **Europe and North America** combined now have the **highest share of older persons**.
  - This demographic shift brings into **question current arrangements of [old-age support](#)** in young and old countries.
- **Gender inequality** also persists into old age. Economically, **women's lower levels of formal labour market participation**, shorter working lives and **lower wages during working years lead to more economic insecurity in later life**.

### What is Ageing of the Population?

- **About:**
  - It refers to the **process by which the proportion of older individuals** in a society increases over time.
  - This is typically measured by the **proportion of the population that is over a certain age**, such as **65 years or older**.
- **Status in India:**
  - According to the [National Commission on Population](#), the share of the elderly in India's population, **close to 9% in 2011**, is growing fast and may reach **18% by 2036**.
  - **Life expectancy in India has more than doubled since Independence** from around 32 years in the late 1940s to 70 years or so today.
- **Problems Associated with the Ageing Population:**
  - **Healthcare Costs:** As people age, they are **more likely to experience chronic physical health conditions** and require more healthcare services.
    - This can lead to increased healthcare costs for **governments, insurers, and**

individuals.

- **Social Security Imbalance:** Ageing populations can put a strain on [social security](#) systems, as a **smaller proportion of the population is working and contributing to the system**, while a **larger proportion is retired and drawing benefits**.
  - This can lead to increased pressure to raise taxes or reduce benefits.
- **Mental Health Issues:** According to a recent survey, **30% to 50% of elderly people had symptoms that make them depressed** due to feelings of powerlessness, loneliness.
  - A large majority of **elderly persons living alone are women**, especially **widows**.
- **Other Problems:**
  - Negligence by kids towards their old parents, Disillusionment due to retirement, Feeling of powerlessness, loneliness, uselessness and isolation in elderly, Generational gap.
- **Current Schemes Related to Old Age Population:**
  - [Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana \(PMVVY\)](#)
  - **Integrated Program for Older Persons (IPOP)**
  - [SAMPANN Project](#)
  - [SACRED Portal for Elderly](#)
  - [Elder Line: Toll-Free Number for Elderly](#)
- **International Initiative:** The [World Health Organization](#) and the **UN** have designated **2021-2030 as the Decade of Healthy Aging**, building on the **Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing** is a good step for elderly empowerment.

## Way Forward

- **Focusing on Healthcare and Social Security:** There is a need to increase funding for healthcare and social security programs to support older citizens.
  - Also, **promoting healthy ageing and preventive healthcare** can reduce the burden of chronic disease.
- **Financial Security to Elderly:** Increase pension coverage and improve [pension schemes](#) to ensure older citizens are financially secure.
- **Linking CSR with Elderly Empowerment:** There is a need to encourage **private sector participation** in the provision of elderly care services through [Corporate Social Responsibility](#).
  - Private sector can also help in the development of age-friendly **infrastructure and environments** to support older citizens.
- **Old Age Self Help Groups: Old Age [Self Help Groups](#)** can be formed at the local level linked with **handloom and handicraft activities** to keep elderly **socially and physically active and busy**.
  - Time to **time board games programmes** can also be organized at **local levels** to promote **intergenerational bonding** through activities that bring **together older and younger citizens**.

## UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

**Q.** Performance of welfare schemes that are implemented for vulnerable sections is not so effective due to the absence of their awareness and active involvement at all stages of the policy process – Discuss. (2019)

**Source:** DTE

