

CARING FOR THE OLD: THE HINDU EDITORIAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND'S INDIA AGEING REPORT 2023

Relevant for: Indian Society | Topic: Population And Associated Issues

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

September 29, 2023 12:10 am | Updated 08:21 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

A good part of the world's population is growing older, and India mirrors this trend as well. The reality, according to the [United Nations Population Fund's India Ageing Report 2023](#), is that the population above 60 years will [double from 10.5% or 14.9 crore \(as on July 1, 2022\) to 20.8% or 34.7 crore by 2050](#). With one in five individuals set to be a senior citizen, there will be implications for health, economy, and society. In Kerala and West Bengal for instance, there is a growing population of the elderly who live alone as children migrate for better opportunities. With life expectancy increasing, thanks to better ways to fight disease, and decreasing fertility rates in many countries, including India, there are challenges in nurturing an expanding elderly population. Within this macro phenomenon, there are myriad other data of importance. For instance, women elderly citizens outnumber their male counterparts. At 60 years, a person in India may expect to live another 18.3 years, which is higher in the case of women at 19 years compared to men at 17.5 years. If women in India, where labour force participation is low at 24%, do not have economic and social security, they will become more vulnerable in old age.

There are also significant inter-State variations. Most States in the south reported a higher share of the elderly population than the national average in 2021, a gap that is expected to widen by 2036. While States with higher fertility rates, such as Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, expect to see an increase in the share of the elderly population too by 2036, the level will remain lower than the Indian average. Overall, more than two-fifths of the elderly are in the poorest wealth quintile — ranging from 5% in Punjab to 47% in Chhattisgarh; also, 18.7% of the elderly do not have any income. A high proportion of the rural population is among the elderly and often economically deprived. To meet the challenges, physical and mental health, basic needs of food and shelter, income security, and social care, a 'whole-of-society' approach is required. Geriatric care must be fine-tuned to their unique health-care needs. There are several schemes targeting the elderly but many are unaware of them or find it too cumbersome to sign up. The National Policy on Older Persons, 1999 and the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 lay down the care of the elderly but to ensure that senior citizens live in dignity, public and private policies must provide a more supportive environment.

COMMENTS

SHARE

[India](#) / [population](#) / [economy \(general\)](#) / [health](#) / [Kerala](#) / [West Bengal](#) / [disease](#) / [geriatrics](#) / [Bihar](#) / [Uttar Pradesh](#) / [Punjab](#) / [Chhattisgarh](#) / [laws](#) / [parent and child](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com