

STAGE 5 - MONITORING AND EVALUATION

What is this Stage about?

Objective:	To establish a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) mechanism to track and evaluate progress, evaluate, adjust and continually improve mainstreaming ageing.
Content:	Suggested actions include determining M&E mechanisms that support timely and consistent monitoring and evaluation, and enable continual learning, and improvements to mainstreaming ageing. This includes defining indicators and identifying both qualitative and quantitative data sources. Suggestions are further made on developing a reporting structure and format.
Result:	M&E mechanism, indicators and reporting format and structure.

Introduction

Based on the strategic goals, directions, expected outcomes, activities and outputs defined in stages 3 and 4 respectively, a final step in developing the framework is deciding on the monitoring, evaluation and reporting modalities. M&E is critical to track and review whether the implementation of the framework is progressing as planned and whether there is progress towards achieving expected outcomes. M&E is important to ensure learning and continual improvements to mainstreaming ageing. M&E supports the determination of whether and how activities are being implemented (outputs) and whether transformative change is occurring by mainstreaming ageing (outcomes). This can help decide if additional activities may be required due to evolving needs and what adjustments need to be made (adjustments). Regular reporting on M&E findings ensures transparency and accountability.

Box 5.1. Guiding questions for monitoring and evaluation

- How can we best measure progress and document lessons learnt?
- How frequently should progress be tracked and reviewed?
- What M&E mechanism is most appropriate?
- Who should be responsible for M&E?
- Which indicators best measure progress?
- What format should the review have?
- Which reporting structures are needed?

Established monitoring, evaluation and reporting modalities for national and local government policies, including for ageing-related policies, can be followed when designing the M&E approach for the mainstreaming framework. It may be helpful to also consider international monitoring and review processes such as the periodic reviews and appraisals of MIPAA (Box 5.2), or Voluntary National Reviews of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Box 5.2. Reviews and appraisal of MIPAA and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Every five years, United Nations Member States undertake a review and appraisal of progress in the implementation of MIPAA (Box 5.1). Modalities and guidance for monitoring, review and appraisal of MIPAA were developed by the United Nations and include qualitative and quantitative methods as well as a set of indicators to assess progress made. In the UNECE Region, the first review and appraisal (MIPAA+5) was carried out in 2007, the second (MIPAA+10) in 2012 and the most recent review (MIPAA+15) was completed in 2017. The UNECE Standing Working Group on Ageing facilitates the periodic reviews by preparing guidelines for national reports.

For more information on periodic MIPAA reviews visit <https://unece.org/review-and-appraisal>

The follow-up and review processes of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development can also be relevant for tracking progress on ageing-related policy priorities. As such, the 2030 Agenda encourages member States to «conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and subnational levels, which are country-led and country-driven». These Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) should take into consideration the key principles of the Agenda including the commitment to the principle of 'leaving no one behind'. The follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda is to ensure a participatory approach to tracking progress and ensuring accountability through the engagement of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders across sectors and at all levels. To strengthen inclusive implementation of the SDGs and, among others, reduce inequality, data should be disaggregated by sex, age and other socio-economic aspects such as income/wealth, location, class, ethnicity, disability status.

A Global Indicator Framework (GIF) was developed and adopted in 2017 to ensure monitoring of the SDGs. It includes 231 indicators. Complementing the Global Indicator Framework, countries are to identify nationally relevant and human rights-sensitive indicators and targets and establish baseline data. The 2030 Agenda encourages the development of disaggregated indicators by sex and age, covering older age groups. As countries are to develop monitoring and reporting systems, many monitoring efforts are ongoing. They include developing review processes and mechanisms that measure progress on national and subnational SDG implementation efforts. It is recommended to consider aligning or integrating monitoring of ageing mainstreaming efforts with the process of monitoring the achieving of the SDGs.

Global Indicator Framework: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/>; see also [A/RES/71/312](https://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2017/17-09-170917.html)

Potential challenges

- Identification of relevant indicators
- Data availability
- Resources needed for monitoring and evaluation activities

The following suggested actions can guide the development of the monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the Strategic Framework.

Suggested Actions



1. Determining a monitoring and evaluation mechanism

➤ Establish mechanisms that supports timely and consistent monitoring and evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation mechanism in the Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Ageing should make provisions for both a continuous assessment of progress on defined activities, outputs and expected outcomes (monitoring) as well as the periodic examination of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of activities in light of the specified goals and objectives (evaluation). While monitoring activities can be organised and carried out through the mainstreaming mechanism put in place (the central coordination body, focal points on ageing and members of the stakeholder network), the evaluation should be conducted by an independent entity to ensure independence, transparency and impartiality of the results and recommendations. The mechanism for monitoring and evaluation should ensure that lessons learnt are captured and feed into a continual adjustment and improvement of mainstreaming efforts. The scope of the monitoring and evaluation framework should be determined according to resources available for these activities.

It is recommended to determine how frequently the monitoring of activities, outputs and progress towards expected outcomes defined in the Strategic Framework will be carried out. There may be different timelines for the monitoring of activities and outputs and of progress towards expected outcomes. For instance, progress on activities and defined outputs could be reported annually by focal points on ageing and the central coordination body, while it may be appropriate to have longer reporting cycles on progress towards expected outcomes, which may take a longer time span to achieve.

To assess the outcomes and societal impact of mainstreaming ageing, it could be considered to draw on existing monitoring tools such as the Active Ageing Index (AAI) or to integrate relevant questions in periodic sectoral reviews that monitor outcomes of government policies for different age and population groups in educational achievement, labour market participation or socio-economic status.²⁶ Periodic MIPAA reviews could be used as a monitoring mechanism to assess changing outcomes for older persons over time.

A participatory approach to assessing the implementation of the activities of the framework involving all relevant stakeholders across government and society allows a broad examination of progress towards the objectives and outcomes of the planned activities, nurtures continuous stakeholder engagement and transparency of the process. A format that builds on ongoing stakeholder engagement in the M&E of all planned and implemented activities is recommended.

2. Defining indicators

➤ Select indicators to track progress

Indicators should be linked to each activity of the implementation plan to measure progress on defined outputs and expected outcomes of mainstreaming ageing. Indicators may have already been developed for measuring progress of existing ageing-related activities or outcomes for specific age groups (for example the AAI, indicators to measure progress in the implementation of MIPAA, the WHO Age-friendly Cities and Communities Framework or the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development).²⁷ If so, these indicators could be reviewed to assess their relevance to the goals, objectives and activities identified in the framework. New indicators will likely have to be developed that are tailored to the expected outcomes and outputs defined in the implementation plan as illustrated in Tables 5.1 and 5.2.

²⁶ Annex 5 includes an example of how the monitoring of ageing-related activities of a national strategy is approached in practice.

²⁷ An example of measuring progress on establishing age-friendly communities is featured in Annex 5.

Table 5.1. Implementation plan including indicators

Vision Statement (Stage 3)							
Strategic Goal 1 (Stage 3)							
Strategic objectives (Stage 3)	Expected outcomes (Stage 3)	Outcome indicators (Stage 5)	Activities (Stage 4)	Outputs (Stage 4)	Output indicators (Stage 5)	Timeframe (Stage 4)	Implementing Partners (Stage 4)
Objective 1.1	Outcome 1.1.1		Activity 1.1.1	Output 1.1.1		E.g. by 2030	E.g. Ministry of Social Affairs
	Outcome 1.1.2		Activity 1.1.2	Output 1.1.2		Etc.	Etc.
	Outcome 1.1.3		Activity 1.1.3	Etc			
	Etc.		Etc.	.			
Objective 1.2			Activity 1.2.1				
			Activity 1.2.2				
Objective 1.3			Etc.				
Strategic objectives	Expected outcomes	Outcome indicators	Activity	Outputs	Output indicators	Timeframe	Implementing Partners
Objective 1.1	Outcome 1.1.1		Activity 1.1.1	Output 1.1.1		E.g. by 2030	E.g. Ministry of Social Affairs
Etc.	Etc.						

Table 5.2. Examples of indicators measuring progress on outputs and outcomes

Goal 1	Mainstream ageing into all policy fields		
Objective 1.1	Address ageing issues in all policy fields.		
Expected outcome 1.1	Ageing issues are integrated in all policy fields.		
Outcome indicator 1.1	Increased share of new laws and policies that address aspects of population ageing and the needs of different age groups.		
	Activities	Outputs	Output indicators
No. 1.1.1	Develop guidelines for age-sensitive analysis and impact assessments.	Guidelines for age-sensitive analysis and impact assessments developed.	Guidelines published (yes/no).
No. 1.1.2	Develop and provide training courses on age-sensitive analysis and impact assessments.	Training provided on age-sensitive analysis and impact assessments.	Percentage of government focal points on ageing trained in age-sensitive analysis and impact assessment methodology.

Table 5.2. Examples of indicators measuring progress on outputs and outcomes (continued)

Goal 1	Mainstream ageing into all policy fields		
Objective 1.1	Address ageing issues in all policy fields.		
Expected outcome 1.1	Ageing issues are integrated in all policy fields.		
Outcome indicator 1.1	Increased share of new laws and policies that address aspects of population ageing and the needs of different age groups.		
	Activities	Outputs	Output indicators
No. 1.1.3	Introduce administrative instructions for carrying out age-sensitive analysis and impact assessments for all planned legislation and policies.	Administrative instructions in force.	Administrative instructions in force (yes/no).
No. 1.1.4	Systematically carry out age-sensitive analysis and impact assessments as part of the planning process for new legislation and policies.	Age-sensitive analysis and impact assessments carried out as part of planning process for new legislation and policies.	Percentage of new laws and policies for which age-sensitive analysis and impact assessments were carried out.
Objective 1.2	Coordinate mainstreaming ageing horizontally and vertically across government sectors and levels.		
Expected outcome 1.2	Mainstreaming activities are effectively coordinated.		
Outcome indicator 1.2	Annual mainstreaming report evidences continual progress on horizontal and vertical coordination of activities.		
	Activities	Outputs	Output indicators
No. 1.2.1	Establish a central coordinating body responsible for coordinating mainstreaming ageing across government.	Central coordination body established.	Central coordination body established (yes/no).
No. 1.2.2	Establish focal points on ageing with clear terms of reference in all ministries at national and subnational level.	Focal points on ageing established in all ministries at national and subnational levels with clear terms of reference.	Percentage of ministries at national and subnational levels with a focal point on ageing. Percentage of focal points on ageing with clear terms of reference.
No. 1.2.3.	Establish mechanisms for regular information exchange.	Regular coordination meetings between central mainstreaming body and focal points on ageing.	Number of coordination meetings held per year.
No. 1.2.4.	Develop action plans for the implementation of activities under the Strategic Framework across sectors.	Focal points on ageing develop ministerial mainstreaming plans.	Percentage of ministries at national and subnational level with mainstreaming ageing plans.
No. 1.2.5	Establish a reporting mechanism to monitor the implementation of activities.	Focal points on ageing report annually on progress made.	Percentage of focal points on ageing that report on progress per year.

Some key components for developing indicators are summarised in Box 5.3.

Box 5.3. Indicator components

When new indicators are being developed the following elements can be considered:

Title:	A brief heading that captures the focus of the indicator.
Definition:	A clear and concise description of the indicator.
Purpose:	The reason why the indicator exists.
Method of measurement:	The logical and specific sequence of operations used to measure the indicator: data collection tools, sampling frames and quality assurance.
Numerator:	The top number of a common fraction, which indicates the number of parts from the whole that are included in the calculation.
Denominator:	The bottom number of a common fraction, which indicates the number of parts in the whole.
Calculator:	The specific steps in the process to determine the indicator value.
Data collection method:	The general approach used to collect data (for example administrative registers, surveys, models, estimates, etc.).
Data collection tools:	The specific tools used to collect the data (for example household surveys, demographic and health surveys etc.).
Data collection frequency:	The intervals at which data are collected (for example quarterly, annually, etc.).
Strengths and weaknesses:	Subgroups - collected data is disaggregated by sex, age, etc.
Challenges:	Potential obstacles or problems that may have an impact on the use of the indicator or its accuracy.
Relevant sources of additional information:	References to information/materials that relate to the indicator.

Source: An Introduction to Indicators, UNAIDS, Monitoring and Evaluation Essentials, 2010

3. Identifying data sources for monitoring and evaluation

➤ Quantitative data

A core prerequisite for effective monitoring and evaluation is data availability. A lack of (disaggregated) data forms a constraint for monitoring mainstreaming efforts as the measurement of indicators is subject to the availability of relevant data. This may require planning the collection of new data and information and considering new approaches to data collection. The review of data in Stage 2 should help inform about available data and information sources that can be used to monitor outcomes and societal impacts of mainstreaming efforts. It should also point to existing data gaps that need to be addressed with new data collection at national and subnational levels.

In order to address data gaps, the application of non-traditional data or the use of non-official data sources can be considered after careful evaluation of reliability, including big-data, citizens-generated data or data collected from non-government data providers or stakeholders. Establishing an online platform or database that enables stakeholder collaboration on the collection of data can help broaden the data collection sources and engage non-governmental stakeholders as data providers.

➤ Qualitative data

Some of the indicators identified as well as evaluation of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of activities can be measured through qualitative information provided through interviews and surveys of key stakeholders and progress reporting by focal points on ageing. Other sources of qualitative information can be available research or bottom-up participatory processes (such as seminars with stakeholders or research projects that explore ageing-related questions). Qualitative research can be commissioned to explore to what extent ageing-related priorities are addressed in new policies and programmes. Qualitative information can also be obtained through consultations with focal points on ageing to assess to what degree communication, coordination, and collaboration have been enhanced to measure effectiveness of mainstreaming mechanisms put in place. The information obtained can respond to the defined questions relating to monitoring and evaluation but also generate new knowledge and insights about emerging concerns and challenges related to mainstreaming.

4. Developing reporting structures and format

➤ Strengthen accountability and commitment

As a part of determining the monitoring and evaluation approach it is important to define reporting structures (who reports to whom) and formats (how should information be reported). Guidelines for reporting can then be prepared accordingly. The reporting structure should ensure accountability to all engaged stakeholders. This is particularly important for the purpose of evaluation and assessment of progress as well as to applying lessons learned from one reporting period to the next.

Implementing partners could be required to regularly report progress to the central coordination body, who in turn would communicate the findings from monitoring and evaluation exercises back to all stakeholders through periodic mainstreaming reports. For instance, progress reports on implementing the Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Ageing can be published on an annual basis. Transparent reporting can help strengthen accountability among implementing partners and ensure that the Strategic Framework remains a priority for the government and stakeholders. Reporting structures should also provide an opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback.

➤ Raise awareness

Regular progress reports can form part of an overall communication strategy or applied as an awareness-raising activity on mainstreaming ageing. It could be considered to create a forum or platform where reporting can be made publicly available, presented and discussed. In addition to enabling the communication of challenges and lessons learnt, a forum can be instrumental for making public the progress made on implementing the Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Ageing. It can also help raise awareness of ageing-related priorities that need attention and help ensure commitment among stakeholders to continue mainstreaming efforts in rapidly evolving contexts.

Checklist

- M&E approach considered
- Monitoring and reporting timelines determined
- M&E mechanism identified
- Data and information sources considered
- Indicators identified
- Reporting structure and format determined
- Participatory approach to M&E ensured
- Mechanism in place to ensure lessons learnt are used to adapt activities and improve the Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Ageing

COMPLETING THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

As a final step, the Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Ageing can be presented in a document that includes the results of each stage:

- Situation analysis report
- Vision statement, strategic goals, objectives and expected outcomes
- Overview of short-, medium- and long-term activities and expected outputs, coordination mechanism, implementing partners and timelines
- Monitoring and evaluation mechanism, indicators, reporting structure and format

The objectives, suggested actions and outcomes of the five stages that support countries in establishing a Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Ageing are summarized in Table 6.

Figure 6. Completing the Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Ageing

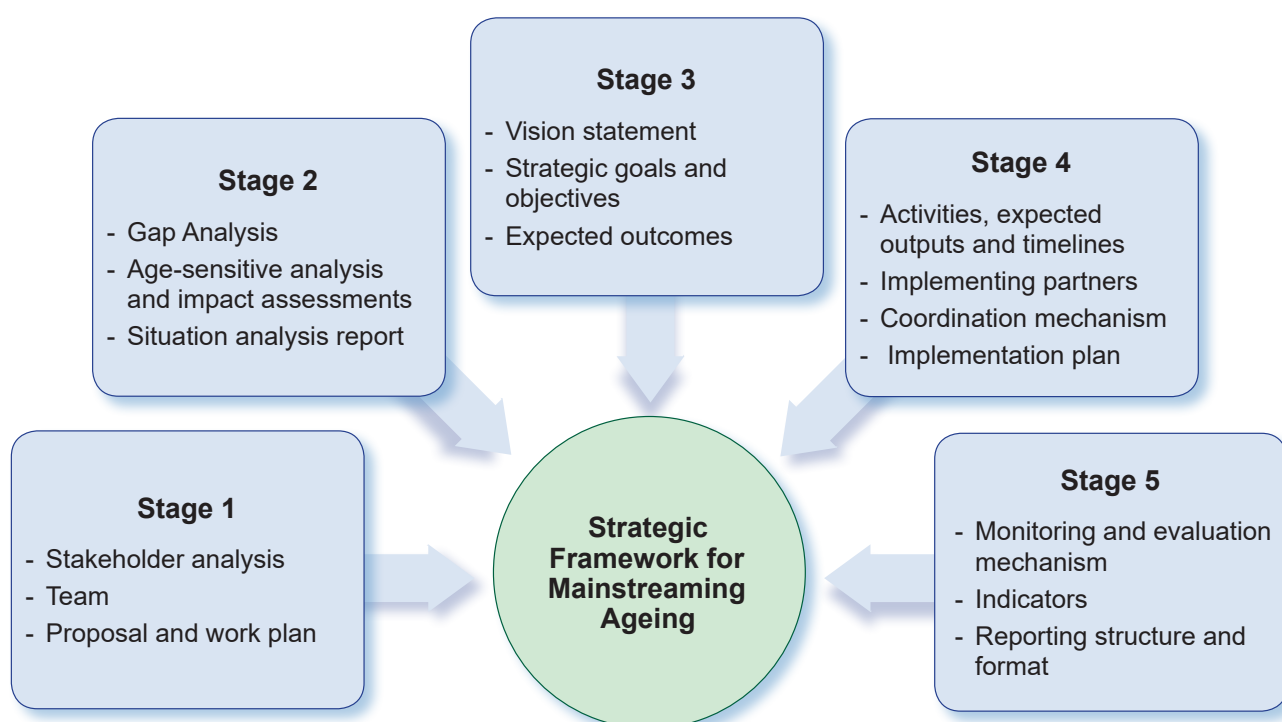


Table 6. Stages, objectives, suggested actions and results

Stages	Objective	Suggested actions	Results
Stage 1: Getting Started	To ensure political commitment and prepare the ground for developing the Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Ageing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making the case for mainstreaming ageing and securing political commitment and resources. - Conducting a stakeholder analysis. - Establishing a team (core group and stakeholder network). - Determining the scope and timelines of the process. - Drafting a proposal. - Establishing a work plan. 	<p>Political commitment Team Proposal Work plan</p>
Stage 2: Analysis	To provide an overview and analysis of the current situation that sets a baseline for the development of the Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Ageing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collecting and mapping of information, data and measures to identify gaps in policies, mainstreaming mechanisms and data. - Carrying out age- and gender-sensitive analysis and impact assessments to identify potential effects of measures on different age groups. - Summarising findings, gaps and analysis in a situation analysis report. 	<p>Overview of existing efforts Identification of problem areas and gaps Situation analysis report</p>
Stage 3: Vision and Directions	To identify the vision and long-term goals to be achieved by the Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Ageing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifying the scope of the strategy. - Organising a public consultation process. - Formulating a vision statement. - Identifying national goals and strategic objectives. - Raising awareness of the vision, strategic goals, objectives and expected outcomes. 	<p>Vision statement Strategic goals Objectives Expected outcomes</p>
Stage 4: Identification of Activities	To identify activities that can help realize the strategic goals, objectives and expected outcomes identified in Stage 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifying short-, medium- and long-term activities. - Establishing a coordination mechanism. - Awareness-raising and capacity-building. - Identifying implementing partners. 	<p>Activities, outputs and timelines Coordination mechanism Implementing partners Implementation plan</p>
Stage 5: Monitoring & Evaluation	To establish a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) mechanism to track and evaluate progress, evaluate, adjust, and continually improve mainstreaming ageing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determining M&E timelines and mechanisms. - Defining indicators. - Identifying data sources. - Developing reporting structure and format. 	<p>M&E mechanism Indicators Reporting structure and format</p>

CONCLUSION

Mainstreaming ageing is a policy strategy directed towards integrating ageing issues into all relevant policy fields on all levels, which helps to adapt to population ageing and ensure the integration of the needs of all age groups, including older persons, into the policymaking process.

The Guidelines presented in this document recommend a ‘twin-track approach’ to mainstreaming that considers both individual and population ageing, is human rights-based, gender-responsive and fosters intra- and intergenerational equity and solidarity. A whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach is recommended and facilitated by the establishment of a coordination mechanism that places a strong emphasis on stakeholder engagement to help leverage the promotion and implementation of mainstreaming ageing across sectors and at all levels of government and society.

The Guidelines address challenges for mainstreaming that governments may encounter, such as: lack of knowledge and awareness of the concerns and advantages that population ageing brings and the needs of different age groups, including older persons; lack of political commitment and resources; limited experience in systematically mainstreaming ageing; potential silo-ed and fragmented approaches and lack of effective coordination and policy coherence; as well as lack of information and (disaggregated) data to support analysis and evidence-based definition of strategic goals, objectives and activities as well as their monitoring and evaluation.

Each country is unique, given the diversity of national contexts, government structures, levels of decentralisation, traditions and cultures across the UNECE region. The activities suggested under each stage aim to be non-prescriptive and the Guidelines encourage countries to build on existing efforts and processes whenever possible when developing their Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Ageing.

By putting emphasis on age-sensitive research and analysis, multi-stakeholder engagement, cross-sectoral coordination and collaboration, as well as alignment with relevant international frameworks, the Guidelines for Mainstreaming Ageing also provide a pertinent tool for implementing the Decade of Action for the accelerated implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals as well as the Decade of Healthy Ageing, with the ultimate goal of creating a society for all ages.