Long-term care system development in Europe and the Middle East: Reflections on Iran’s long-term care system

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Overview

Population Ageing
- Structural changes
- Speed
- Economic & social implications

Long Term Care (LTC) eco-systems
→ Care Models
→ Direction of developments
→ Contexts & challenges

• Old and new-comers
• Comparative perspective
  – Examples from Europe and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA region)
  – Similarities & differences
  – Two-directional learning (global north & south)

• Emerging opportunities for policy and practice developments
What is Population Ageing?

Changes to the whole structure of a population

Measurements

- Age Index
- Age dependency ratio,
- Percentage over 65+
- **Dynamic**: prospective ageing

- Societal/population level
- Linked to economic productivity (retirement)
- Individual’s perception of ageing
  - What one can and can not do!
  - Expectations from and opportunities at old age
- Differentials by societal & individual factors
- Variations in health and wellbeing at older age is not random

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Different countries at different stages

There is an inverse relationship between fertility and LE across the region

Iran is situated close to Tunisia and Bahrain in terms of both TFR and LE

Current TFR reflects previous fertility policies in Iran
Only Tunisia, Iran, Lebanon and Morocco have started the transition.

The pace of change in Iran is considerable (20 years in total).

By 2041, 14% of the Iranian population will be aged 65 or more.
Life expectancy at age 60 is also increasing
Not all years gained are healthy years

- Both life expectancy and healthy life expectancy are increasing
  - Nature longevity limit?
  - HLE not growing as fast as LE

→ High number of years lived with LTC needs
→ Significant gender, ethnic & socio-economic differentials
→ Differentials within and across countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Life Expectancy at birth</th>
<th>Healthy life expectancy at birth</th>
<th>Difference between life expectancy and healthy life expectancy in years</th>
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</tbody>
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Average LE & HLE at birth in 2019, source: World Health Organization
Population Ageing in Iran and the MENA region

- ‘Rapid’ process of ageing
  - Fast and steep
- High level of unpreparedness
  - Health and LTC services
  - Infrastructure
- Social & economic opportunities
- Social-determinants of health and wellbeing at old age
- Nested within other demographic dynamics (pop. growth & dividends)
- Socio-political structures
- Perceived age-related roles & duties

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What is LTC?

LTC systems relatively young
- Governance spread - horizontally & vertically
- Funding - cost reduction
- Workforce - shortages

(dis)connect to health services
- Integration aspiration

links to social protection & welfare benefits

Influenced by a range of policies
- Public health, migration & employment

Informal care

System shocks
- Brexit, COVID19

International Agenda: SDGs

Innovations
- Data generation & utilisation
- AI/technology
- Assistive care

Informal/unpaid care
- Intergenerational
- Communities
- Self-care

Integration
- Care continuum

Person-centeredness
- Partnerships & co-production

Other public policies

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LTC models - Europe

Care regimes
- Care Mix (Western)
- Universal (Nordic)
- Family-based (Mediterranean)
- Transitional (Central/East Europe)

Convergence of care models across Europe
- Marketisation/Commodification
- De-institutionalization/Ageing in place
- Fragmentation
- Informal/private arrangements
- Migrant workers

The role of the state, family and individuals
- Shifting responsibilities
- Familisation/Intergenerational support
- Re-emergence of caring communities

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COVID19 & LTC market

Social isolation
Care interruption

Technology
Access inequalities

Changes in LTC preferences
Severity of needs

Workforce implications
Financial cost

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LTC eco-systems in the MENA region

- Universal health coverage remains an aspiration
- LTC is in a policy blind-spot, for many reasons
  - Reliance on families (traditional hubs of care)
    - Within a context of dynamic changes in family structures, living arrangements ...
  - Limited LTC services
    - Primarily community based, NGOs and informal arrangements
  - Lack of acknowledgment of caring burdens (provided mainly by women)
- Opportunities: population dividends & labour supply

Some recent national, regional and global policy attention
- Narratives of intergenerational solidarity, families & ageing in place

Quality of life & inequalities
Female Labour Force Participation

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Implications of population ageing

- Fiscal/economic implications
  - When combined with low employment rates
  - Potential underutilisation of human resources → losing opportunities associated with population dividends
  - Pension and insurance systems (linked to employment)
  - Distinguishing population and system demographics

- Social implications
  - Perceptions of ageing (changing habits)
  - Opportunities (life-long learning, re-employsments)
  - Risks (isolation & loneliness, abuse/safeguarding)
  - Care burden
Ageism, Social Norms & Isolation

- Pre-existing & new perceptions
- Definitional challenges: what does ‘ageism’ mean in different contexts and settings?
  - Benevolent and hostile elements
- Operates at different levels: cognition, emotional & actions
- Different components: stereotyping; prejudice and discrimination
- Intersectionality: age, disability, gender, race etc.
Distributed by level of palliative care: Iran is G3a

Iran, Lebanon, and Jordan have higher HCE (compared to Morocco, Egypt, and Iraq albeit all having similar GDP per capita).

Iran had several major health reforms over the years.
One would expect higher health expenditure per capita as old age dependency ratio increases.

Not the expected trend (due to GCC high health expenditures and younger age groups).

Yet, there are some variations considering other countries e.g. Egypt & Algeria.
LTC services in the MENA region

- Informal, unregulated and fragmented care
  - Provided by families, domestic workers and charitable organisations on ad hoc basis
  - Intergenerational exchange (bi-directional)
  - Lacks a coherent framework
  - Questions on sustainability and suitability

- Job creation opportunities
  - One of the fastest growing markets for employment globally, esp. for women
  - Training and career development
  - Trust and perceptions
Proposed LTC services: based on needs

Fully independent older people
- Community participation
- Later life learning
- Day centres
- Home support services
- Preventative services
- Digital literacy

Older people with care needs
- Home care
- Day care
- Home support services
- Supported living
- Family support services
- Community support

Older people with complex needs
- Care homes
- Nursing homes
- Palliative care
- Family support services
- Specialist care services (e.g. Dementia care)
Potential of LCT services to achieve healthy ageing

- Ageing in Place
- Long life learning at later life
- Economic participation
- Recognition & Participation
- Financial wellbeing
- LTC beyond personal/medical care
- COVID-19
LTC eco-systems

Paradigm shift from a notion of ‘crisis’ to realising opportunities

The flow of knowledge and ideas is two-directional

Significant role of informal care
   Including social capital and community

Unequal experiences/pathways but common goals

- Placing LTC on the agenda!
- (In)Equality
- Rethinking the life-course
   - Learning, training and work
- Care continuum
- Inclusivity of the built and socially-constructed environment
- Assistive technology and LTC
- Re-thinking the notion of ‘ageing’
   - While acknowledging inequalities
- Sustainability
The LTC eco-system
Substitution & Complementarity

- **Europe**
  - Increasing role of the individual, family & communities
  - Fragmentation vs. integration
  - Crisis narratives

- **MENA**
  - Early developments
  - Informal care (embedded in policy development)
  - Fiscal & governance constraints
  - Opportunities within an evolving crisis
Opportunities & Challenges

Fiscal constraints
Competing policy priorities
Challenges to traditional social structures
  • Extended families, closed-net communities
Environment & infrastructure
Awareness & stigma
  • E.g., Dementia

• A growing interest in global ageing, particularly healthy ageing
• The UN decade of health ageing (2021-2030) – building on the 2030 SDGs
• An interest in LMIC and the MENA region in developing ageing policies and supporting the community as a whole
• Realization of the need for data, evidence and dialogue
Awareness Raising The Middle East and North Africa Research on Ageing Healthy (MENARAH) Network

- Launched Sep. 2020 (www.menarah.org)
  - Builds on activities since 2015
- Focuses on healthy ageing in its broadest meaning
- A network of researchers, NGOs, policymakers and many more
- Aims to
  - Raise awareness and connect different actors
  - Conduct research and knowledge mobilisation activities
  - Inform policy and practice formulation & development
Developing Practical Online Tools

https://www.facebook.com/Our-Elde's-Health-104264887980919/

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Designing policy services & interventions

- Theory of Change
- Data & evidence
  - Diversity of sources: opinion polls, administrative data, small surveys, scientific studies
  - Indicators: individual, community and national levels
  - Accumulative knowledge/situational analysis
- Consultations
  - Ensuring the voices of different groups and stakeholders
- Language and terminologies
- Communications
- Test pilots and scaling up
  - Implementation & evaluation

Diagram:
- Design
- Pilot
- Implement
- Evaluate
- Enhance
- Scale up
Types of data

- Country Level Indicators
- National Level Aggregate Data
- Local/regional Aggregates
- Individual Level
  - National Surveys
  - Research Data
  - Administrative Data
Using data and modeling to monitor and predict future needs
Moving forward

Empower older people and enhance self-care
- Through the life course & Public engagement (language and images)
- Support informal carers

Capacity building & knowledge mobilization

Lessons from COVID19

Create formal mechanisms for LTC provision
- Market shaping
- Set standards and regulations
- Partnership working & integrated services
- Pilot, evaluate and upscale

Develop and train a diverse workforce
- Creation of job opportunities and career opportunities
- Capitalise on the window of youth dividends

Funding and financing LTC
Thank you for Listening

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