

Older persons in forced displacement

Handout 1 – Quiz

Are these statements about older persons true or false?

1. By 2030, 1 in 8 people in the world will be aged 60 or over.
 - True
 - False
2. Between 2015 and 2050, the proportion of the world's population aged 60 or over will nearly double from 12 per cent to 22 per cent.
 - True
 - False
3. 15 per cent of the world's population have one or more disabilities; within this figure, it is estimated that 30 per cent of older persons have one or more disabilities.
 - True
 - False
4. By 2020, persons aged 60 or over outnumbered children under 5.
 - True
 - False
5. An estimated 10 per cent of all displaced persons in the world are older persons, although a lack of age-disaggregated data may hide a much higher percentage.
 - True
 - False
6. Collecting data using four Washington Group questions will provide data on the diversity of older persons.
 - True
 - False
7. Collecting data using the age cohort 50-59 / 60+ will provide data on the differing levels of needs of older persons life.
 - True
 - False

Handout 2 – Using a problem tree to identify protection risks and barriers for older persons

This worksheet will help you to learn from your experience using a problem tree.

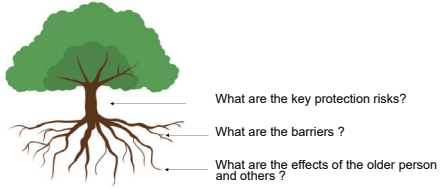
Part one: identify protection risks and underlying factors

In your experience, what protection risks might older persons experience in forced displacement?

From the list below, select one potential protection risk and identify the underlying factors that might contribute to that risk.

Use a problem tree like the one in the illustration below to reflect the underlying causes (roots), the protection risk (trunk) and the impact on older persons (branches).


Use a problem tree to identify protection risks and barriers of older persons in forced displacement



What are the key protection risks?

What are the barriers ?

What are the effects of the older person and others ?



What **common protection risks** might older persons face, living in forced displacement?

What are the potential **underlying causes** of these risks? (Consult the list of personal factors, threats and barriers below).

Possible protection risks as guidance

Consider protection risks in the home and in the community.

1. Forcibly displaced older persons are at heightened risk of violence, including sexual and domestic abuse, exploitation by family members, etc.
2. Older persons face increased stigma and discrimination in certain settings
3. Unaccompanied older persons lack access to basic services in emergency situations, resulting in risks to their safety and exposure to abuse: lack of access to adequate accommodation, theft or misuse of their belongings, difficulties in obtaining water, rations and fuel, diversion of support addressed to them (e.g. cash assistance).

Underlying barriers

Consider the attitudinal, environmental and institutional barriers facing older persons as regards accessing services and maintaining a level of independence and autonomy:

1. Lack of accessible information.
2. Limited opportunities to give feedback.
3. Lack of training and capacity of humanitarian actors.

Underlying threats:

1. Discriminatory attitudes against older persons – ageism.
2. Non-state armed groups and organized violence.
3. Restrictions to access health care for refugees.

Underlying personal factors:

1. Older persons are often less mobile; their sight and hearing may fail.
2. Older persons' psychosocial capacities and muscle strength may diminish.
3. Older persons may have chronic health problems and specific nutritional needs.
4. Family members may become separated or die, leaving older persons without traditional forms of family support.
5. Older persons may also become their grandchildren's main caregivers.
6. Older women, older men and women with disabilities, and older LGBTI persons are recognized to be at increased risk.

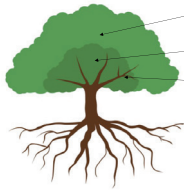
Possible impact on older persons

1. Exposure to threats, violence and abuse, including loss of income due to extortion.
2. Impact on older persons' health: injuries, infections, poor mental health, etc.
3. Isolation, poor self-esteem and loss of hope.


Part two: identify ways of mitigating protection risks

In your experience, what strategies can be employed to mitigate the risks faced by older persons in forced displacement?

Using a problem tree to find ways to mitigate protection risks and barriers of older persons in forced displacement



- What solutions can you suggest to mitigate risk ?
- What solutions can you suggest to remove barriers ?
- How to build resilience of older persons ?



What **type of strategies** can be applied to support older persons through removing barriers and mitigating risks?

What type of **targeted support** can be provided to build the resilience of older persons?

Share your experiences of mitigating protection risks and barriers faced by older persons in forced displacement.

- ▶ What solutions have you identified to mitigate risk?
- ▶ What solutions have you identified to mitigate barriers?
- ▶ How do you build the resilience of older persons?

Examples

1. Identify and mitigate barriers to accessing WASH, Shelter, NFI's, nutrition, and health services.
2. Improve data collection and registration using sex-, age- and disability-disaggregated data.
3. Use Community-Based approaches to ensure that older persons receive care and support as well as social protection services and mental health and psychological support.
4. Recognize and support the capacities of older persons.
5. Strengthen family and community structures.
6. Strengthen accountability mechanisms by making them accessible and responsive to older persons.
7. Enhance case management capacity to prevent and respond to abuse and exploitation of older persons.
8. Provide equal access to durable solutions through accompaniment and support in resettlement, return and integration processes.
9. Consider the use of technology in improving access to services and information.
10. Empower and support communities, in particular older persons and their relatives, to develop their own strategies to reduce exposure and mitigate risks.

For more details on how to implement these actions, please consult [UNHCR | Working with Older Persons in Forced Displacement](#)

Handout 3 – Case studies

CARD 1 – Instructions

What protection risks might these older persons face?

Select one of the following four case studies (two focus on home-based risks and two focus on risks at community level).

Reflecting on the protection risks discussed in the previous activity, identify any signs that might indicate the presence of protection risks, the root causes of these, any barriers to ensuring protection and the potential impact on the selected case.

- Based on the information provided, which of the following might be signs of a protection concern for this case? **Mark the signs applicable to the case study you have selected**

Suggested signs of a protection concern	Tick
(a) Unexplained weight loss	
(b) Lack of interest in food	
(c) Neglect	
(d) Unusual changes in behavior and interaction with others	
(e) Tired or listless	
(f) Bruises, burns or injuries	
(g) Feeling of isolation	
(h) Add others	

- Which ones might constitute barriers to ensuring protection for this case? **Mark the barriers applicable to the case study you have selected.**

(a) Limited access to receive and share information	
(b) Aid distribution not reaching the home	
(c) Carers not interested or having difficulties in caring for their family member	
(d) No access to appropriate medication	
(e) Not able to reach water	
(f) Long queues with nowhere to sit to wait	
(g) Distributed materials too heavy to carry	
(h) Helpers wanting money to carry items	
(i) Not able to read the information signage	
(j) Not knowing the times of the services	
(k) Case management system for older persons not available	
(l) Not able to access a complaint mechanism	



— CARD 1 – Instructions —

Describe here the protection risks that this case might face and the potential impact that they would have on their **independence, participation, self-fulfillment, dignity, and care**.

Protection risks	Potential impact
E.g. Maryam could face abandonment by carers, who might flee to a neighboring country without her.	Lack of access to daily care and food, leading to malnutrition and potentially death

3. What can be done to mitigate risks and remove barriers for this case?

Use these case studies and findings and read the checklist to see which suggestions could mitigate these risks and barriers to ensure that their rights to **independence, participation, self-fulfillment, dignity and care** are upheld without discrimination in the home setting.

Identify relevant actions to support this case using a twin-track approach: mark actions that could be **mainstreamed** into regular activities with an “M” and other actions that would require a more **targeted** approach with a “T”.

Actions (extracted from the Need-to-Know Guidance on older persons)	Tick/M/T
1. Provide cash-based assistance and engage community volunteers to ensure that shelters have basic security fittings.	
2. Provide psychosocial support aimed at improving the protection conditions of older persons by supporting them and their families to cope with the crisis.	
3. Ensure that older persons are not at risk of separation from their relatives. Where necessary, ensure that older persons are included in family reunification programming.	
4. Identify safe alternatives for older persons and their relatives who are engaged in harmful or risky income-generation activities.	
5. Build resilience in older persons, ensure that they are actively and meaningfully participating in order to better inform and design responses.	



— CARD 1 – Instructions —

Actions (extracted from the Need-to-Know Guidance on older persons)	Tick/M/T
6. Engage community structures to enable older persons and their carers to have access to home care, medical and social support, rehabilitation, assistive products and nursing services.	
7. Bring community members together to discuss possible solutions to prevent elder abuse in their community and consult older persons separately about their needs; address these needs through protection and assistance	
8. Consider providing top-up cash or non-food items to process food so that it is easy to eat and digest, such as manual blenders.	
9. Use a range of approaches and methodologies to consult with older persons directly, taking account of age, gender, disabilities, culture, mobility, language and accessibility	
10. Consult with all older people about how they would like to provide feedback to, and hear responses from, UNHCR and its partners so that safeguarding mechanisms can be designed to be safe and accessible to all.	
11. Consider how intergenerational support can help both older persons and youth; strengthen and maintain relationships between generations.	
12. Collect information on factors preventing older people and older people with disabilities from accessing services and factors enabling them to access services at home and in the community.	
13. Involve the community and older people in participatory risk assessments to ensure a nuanced understanding of the risks and barriers that exist and to raise the awareness of UNHCR and partners' staff, displaced communities and families.	
14. Work with different sectors (Health, WASH NFI etc.) to identify ways to make their work more inclusive.	
15. Provide transport services and other organized support for older persons and others who are not well placed to access general distribution services.	
16. Adapt case management systems to include focal points for elder abuse	
17. Train staff and volunteers to be better prepared to work with older persons.	



— CARD 1 — Instructions —

4. Whom would you involve to ensure that these activities can take place? In the table below, list the stakeholders required to collaborate to achieve these actions.

Stakeholders required	Roles and responsibilities

Key messages

- Many protection risks that older persons face are hidden and listening to their stories is an important way to better understand these risks and barriers.
- Working together with older persons and their family and community will help to identify realistic activities that can be mainstreamed, as well as tailored support, to ensure that their rights to **independence, participation, self-fulfillment, dignity and care** are upheld without discrimination.



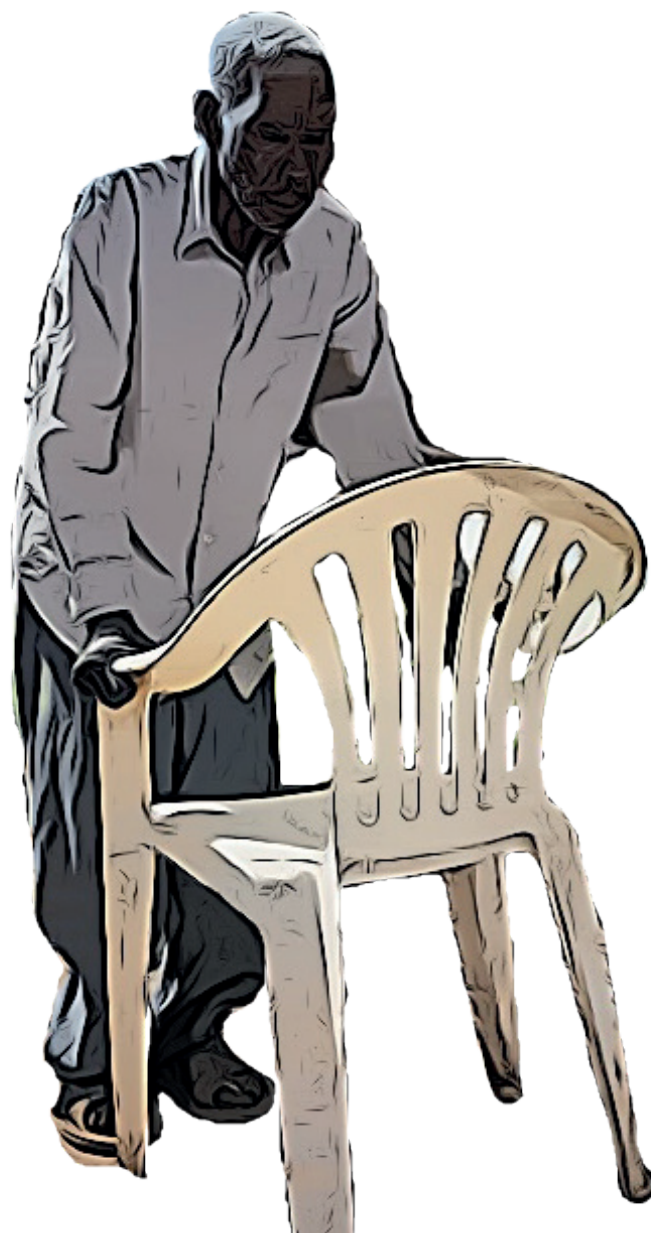
CARD 2 – MARYAM

“My name is Maryam, I am 78 years old, and I have been displaced due to war to a village close to the border, which we cannot cross as we don’t have passports. I have chronic health issues and now cannot walk as I had a stroke three years ago; I rely on my carers Fadhillah and Farah, to look after me now, which is very difficult for me to accept. I am getting angry with them as they keep insisting I eat and I have no appetite, I cannot get up to use the toilet chair without their help. It is always cold in this shelter and the rainwater comes through the roof. My carers stay with me daily and they find it hard to look after their families because of me. I have heard them speaking about crossing the border with smugglers, but I do not find it safe.”



CARD 3 – JOSEPH

“My name is Joseph and I am 69 years old, and I am getting weaker and my balance is poor; I cannot see clearly now. I often have difficulty finding the toilet in the dark. The local fighting has forced me back to my village, where most of my neighbours have left and I now live alone. I don’t bother to eat regularly or even wash myself. I find it so hard to get to the market so must pay for help from an older woman, who is also alone. I have heard that some foreigners are giving money to help people, but you need to have one of these cell phones. I don’t feel safe here and cannot sleep.”



CARD 4 – AYE

“My name is Aye, I am 67 years old and I had to flee my homeland; I am so weak and have not eaten for days. I went to the health centre to get medicines I used to take for my heart but they sent me away saying that they could not understand my prescriptions. My son has to leave me to get food from the distribution points but I am afraid of being alone as people steal from our homes, especially in the night.”



CARD 5 – ABDUL

“My name is Abdul and [I am] 70 years old and I am the only one in the family to go to get the aid that comes each week in this new country we are living in. I cannot hear clearly now and do not always know where to go for the aid as they keep changing the distribution points. Sometimes I come back empty-handed, and my family is so angry with me. Now the weather is so cold and I do not have warm clothes and often I stand for four hours waiting to see if I can get some food and water. I used to be a community leader but now no one thinks I am capable to do that.”



Older persons in forced displacement

Handout 4 – Final Quiz

1. What percentage of displaced persons are older persons?
 - a. 4%
 - b. 10%
 - c. 20%
2. What percentage of older persons is estimated to have one or more disabilities?
 - a. 15%
 - b. 40%
 - c. 46%
3. There is no one definition of older persons – it concerns more than just being over 60.
 - a. True
 - b. False
4. What are the recommended age cohorts for collecting data on older persons?
 - a. Age cohorts of 5 years
 - b. Aggregating data on persons aged 60+ as one age cohort
 - c. Age cohorts of 10 years
5. List some of the signs that can help in identifying a situation of elder abuse. [Free Text]

6. List key steps in ensuring the protection and inclusion of older persons. [Free Text]