Executive Summary

The COVID-19 pandemic is causing untold fear and suffering for older people across the world. As of 26 April, the virus itself has already taken the lives of some 193,710 people[1], and fatality rates for those over 80 years of age is five times the global average.[2] As the virus spreads rapidly to developing countries, likely overwhelming health and social protection systems, the mortality rate for older persons could climb even higher.

Less visible but no less worrisome are the broader effects: health care denied for conditions unrelated to COVID-19; neglect and abuse in institutions and care facilities; an increase in poverty and unemployment; the dramatic impact on well-being and mental health; and the trauma of stigma and discrimination.

Efforts to protect older persons should not overlook the many variations within this category, their incredible resilience and positivity, and the multiple roles they have in society, including as caregivers, volunteers and community leaders. We must see the full diversity of people within the older persons category[3]. Women, for instance, are over-represented among both older persons and among the paid and unpaid care workers who look after them. We must also recognize the important contribution of older persons to the crisis response, including as health workers and caregivers. Each of us – States, businesses, international organizations, companies, communities, friends and family – need to step up our effort to support older persons. We must do everything possible to preserve their rights and dignity at all times.

Across society, COVID-19 presents a range of particular risks for older persons.

- **Life and death:** Although all age groups are at risk of contracting COVID-19, older persons bsf!bu!b!tjhojÅdbou!z!ijhi fs!sjtl!pg!npsubmjuz! and severe disease following infection, with uiptf!pwfs!91!zfbst!pme!ezjoh!bu!Åwf!ujnft! uif!bwfsbhf!sbuf/!Bo!f tujnbufe!77&!pg!qfpqmf! aged 70 and over have at least one under-mzjoh!dpoejujpo-!qmbdjoh!uif n!bu!jodsfbtfe! sjtl!pg!tfwfsf!jn qbdu!gspn!DPWJE.2:/[4] Older qfstpot!nbz!bmtp!gbdf!bhf!ejtdsjnjobujpo! jo!efdjtpot!po!n fejdbm!dbsf-!usjbhf-!boe!

1 https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/situation-reports/20200426-sitrep-97-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=d1c3e800_6

2 COVID-19 Strategy Update, 14 April 2020. World Health Organization. https://www.who.int/publications-detail/covid-19-strategy-update---14-april-2020

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mjgf.tbwjoh!uifsbqjft/!Hmpcbm!jofrvbmjujft!nfbo!uibu-!bmsfbez!qsf.DPWJE.2:-!bt!nboz!bt!ibmg!pg!pmefs!qfstpot!jo!tpnf!efwfmpqjoh!countries did not have access to essential health services.[5]!Uif!qboefnjd!nbz!bmtp!mfbe!up!b!tdbmjoh!cbdl!pg!dsjujdbm!tfswjdft!unrelated to COVID-19, further increasing risks to the lives of older persons.

- **Vulnerability and neglect:**!Tpnf!pmefs!qfpqmf!gbdf!beejujpobm!wvmofsbcjmjujft!bu!uijt!ujnf/!Uif!tqsfbe!pg!DPWJE.2:!jo!dbsf!ipnft!boe!jotujtutions is taking a devastating toll on older people's lives, with distressing reports indidbujoh!jotubodft!pg!ofhmfdu!ps!njtusfbunfou/!Pmefs!qfstpot!xip!bsf!rvbsboujofe!ps!mpdlfe!epxo!xjui!gbnjmz!nfncfst!ps!dbsfhjwfst!nbz!bmtp!gbdf!ijhifs!sjtl!pg!wjpmfodf-!bcvtf-!boe!neglect. Older persons living in precarious dpoejujpot!p!tvdi!bt!sfgvhff!dbnqt-!jogpsnbm!tfuumfnfout!boe!qsjtpot!p!bsf!qbsujdvmbsmz!bu!sjtl-!evf!up!pwfsdspxefe!dpoejujpot-!mjnjufe!access to health services, water and sanitation facilities, as well as potential challenges bddfttjoh!ivnbojubsjbo!tvqqpsu!boe!bttjtubodf/!Gvsuifsnpsf-!pmefs!qfstpot!bsf!bmtp!pgufo!bnpoh!uif!dbsfhjwfst!sftqpoejoh!up!uif!qboefnjd-!jodsfbtjoh!uifjs!sjtl!pg!fyqptvsf!to the virus. This is particularly true of older ipnf.cbtfe!dbsfst-!uif!wbtu!nbkpsjuz!pg!ufn!xpnfo-!xip!qspwjef!dbsf!gps!pmefs!qfstpot-!ftqfdjbmmz!jo!dpoufyut!xifsf!ifbmui!tztufnt!boe!mpoh.ufsn!dbsf!qspwjtjpo!bsf!xfbl/

- **Social and economic well-being:** The virus jt!opu!kvtu!uisfbufojoh!uif!mjwft!boe!tbgfuz!of older persons, it is also threatening their

While the median age of confirmed COVID-19 cases is 51 (see figure 2), fatality rates for those over 80 years of age is five times the global average.[7] Over 95 per cent of fatal-jujft!evf!up!DPWJE.2:!jo!Fvspqf!ibwf!cffo!pg!qfqmf!71!zfbst!ps!pmefs/[8] In the United Tubuft-!91&!pg!efbuit!xfsf!bn poh!bevmut!76!boe!pwfs/[9]!Jo!D ijob-!bqqspyjn bufmz!91&!pg!efbuit!pddvssfe!bn poh!bevmut!bhfe!71!zfbst!or older.[10] This reality poses a series of direct and indirect challenges for older persons9022 49Ar-.5 (p)-w 9.2.*L*angT5 (g)-2 (e)2.9 (s)10.4 (f)15.5 (o)65.5 (o)(BD8 BT9.5 02

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SOLUTIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS

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Universal health coverage: Pwfs!uif!ofyu!uisff! efdbeft-!uif!hmpcbm!ov ncfs!pg!pmefs!qfstpot!jt! qspkfdufe!up! npsf!uibo!epvcmf-!sfbdijoh!pwfs! 2/6!cjmjpo!qfstpot/!Vojwfstbm! Ifbmui!Dpwfsbhf! dboopu!cf!bdijfwfe!xjuipvu!beesfttjoh!uif jfs! needs.[32]!Tusfohuifojoh!qvcmjd!ifbmui!tztufnt!bt! b!qbsu!pg!cvjmejoh!hmpcbm!ifbmui!tfdvsjuz!boe!voj- wfstbm!ifbmui!dpwfsbhf!jt!dsjujdbm!up!fotvsf!cfuufs! ifbmui!boe!xfmm.cfjoh!gps!bmm!qfpqmf!fwfszxifsf/!!

Care and support services: The COVID-19 pan- efnjd!ibt!fyqtfe!jobefrvbuf!boe!voefsgvoefe! care and support services for older persons. Many older persons have no access to, or choice and control over, the care and support services uifz!nbz!offe!up!mjwf!joefqfoefou-!bvupopnpvt! lives in the setting of their choice. The types pg!dbsf!boe!tvqqpsu!tfswjdft!bwbjmbcmf!up!pmefs! qfstpot!wbsz-!cvu!jo!nboz!qmbdft!uiftf!tfs- wjdft!bsf!mjnjufe!boe!vobggpsebcmf!up!fwfszpof! fydfqu!uipuf!po!b!ijhi!jodpnf/!Gps!nptu-!gbnjmz! nfncfst!bsf!uif!pomz!dbsf!boe!tvqqpsu!qspwje- fst!bwbjmbcmf!up!uif n/!Ju!jt!jn qpsubou!up!jowftu! in their care and support services to ensure that services are adapted to older persons joejwjevbm!offet-!qspnpuf!uifjs!xfmm.cfjoh!boe! nbjoubjo!uifjs!bvupopnz!boe!joefqfoefodf/!

Legal protection:!Nboz!dpvousjft!mbdl!befrvbuf! legislation at the national level to protect the sjhiut!pg!pmefs!qfstpot!boe!up!qsfwfou!ejtdsjn- jobujpo-!fydmvtjpo-!nbshjobmj{bujpo-!wjpmfodf! boe!bcvtf/[33]!Uphfuifs!xjui!uif!bctfodf!pg!b! efejdbufe!joufsobujpobmmz.bhsffe!mfhbm!gsbnf- work,[34]!!uijt!dpousjcvuft!up!uif!wvmofsbcmjuz! pg!pmefs!qfstpot!boe!nbzibwf!dpousjcvufe! up!bu!ujnft!jobefrvbuf!sftqpotft!up!uif! DPWJE.2:!dsjtjt/!Uiftf!hbqt!nvtu!cf!Ámfe-! if we are to ensure the rights of the growing population of older persons in all societies.

SOLUTIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS:

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SOLUTIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS

- Review disaggregation protocols for data on social welfare, violence (including ep n ftujd!boe!hfoefs.cbtfe!wjpmfodf*-! qvcmjd!qbsujdjqbujpo-!boe!puifs!fttfoujbm! joejdupst!up!sf n pwf!vqqfs!bhf!dvu.pggt! and to ensure full older age disaggregaujpo!pg!dsvdjbm!ebub/!Qsp n puf!uif!hfofsbujpo!boe!ubcvmbujpo!pg!bwbjmbcmf!ebub!po! pmefs!qfstpot!cz!Åwf.zfbs!bhf!hspvqt/[38]

- Jo!beejujpo!up!bhf-!qsp n puf!uif!dpmmfdujpo-!gfs