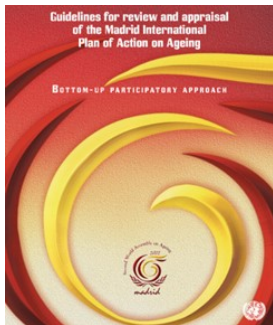


### News from the Field

#### **“Major surgery required! We need a Convention on the Rights of Older People”**

**20 Years - Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA)**

**20 Years - UNECE Regional Implementation Strategy (RIS): Experiences, Achievements and the Way Forward**



“What is needed is major surgery that would drastically remove the cancers of existing inequalities, remove existing violations of human rights, remove existing deficits in legislation, policies and programs, remove existing ageism and elder abuse, and remove existing acceptance of the disposability of older persons. They should all be removed, immediately.” This heartfelt and powerful statement came from Frances Zainoeddin, Vice Chair of the NGO Committee on

Ageing New York, who was addressing a webinar convened by the International Federation on Aging (IFA), the NGO Committee on Ageing in Vienna, and the Austrian Federal Ministry of Social Affairs on 20 years’ of MIPAA.

Frances asked: “Are we moving forward?” And replied emphatically, “I would say yes, but at a snail’s pace. If we continue like this, by the time the youth of today reach 65, they will have to continue our current fight for a dignified life. We do not want cosmetic treatment; we need major surgery. And major surgery means having a convention.” [Read more.](#)



Dirk Jarré, President of the European Federation of Older Persons (EURAG) spoke in the same webinar about the role of civil society and the way forward. He lamented the fact that so little was asked of civil society, and asserted the importance of including representatives of older people as natural partners. [Read more.](#)

### **GAROP's new Chairman, Dr Kiran Rabheru, ILC-Canada**



The lethal pandemic of ageism and the crisis for older persons created by the COVID-19 pandemic call for immediate, decisive and strategic action to move forward with GAROP's mission to make the lives of older persons better by securing a UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons. Dr Rabheru paid tribute to Ken Bluestone of Age International, the outgoing Chair. Two Deputy Chairs are Naraidoo Gava Naraidoo (Vijay Naraidoo) of DIS-MOI in Mauritius, a Pass It On Network liaison, and Isabel Lovrincevich of ILC Argentina. Margaret Young, our liaison in Vancouver, Canada, also serves on the elected GAROP Steering Committee.



*Naraidoo Gava Naraidoo*



*Isabel Lovrincevich*



*Margaret Young*

The Global Alliance for the Rights of Older Persons (GAROP), founded in 2011 by a collaborative of [nine organizations](#), is today a network of more than 380 organizations working to achieve its mission to support and enhance civil society's engagement with Member States and National Human Rights Institutions at national, regional and international levels around a Convention on the Rights of Older Persons.

Age Advocacy has surfaced as the first of three priority action areas for the Pass It On Network in current discussions about our plan for the next three years. GAROP's leadership for collaborative advocacy will be critical for making major progress.



### **Old'Up launches on YouTube**

[Old'Up](#) speaks to the "not so young but not so old" who seek to give meaning and usefulness to our longer lives.

Martine Gruere-Arnaud (photo), vice president, launches their first video on their new [YouTube channel](#). Moira Allan was recently elected to the board and will be looking after European and International Affairs.

## Network Connectors

### **“For drought-stricken Zimbabwe, the COVID-19 epidemic is just the last straw!”**



*Beatrice Sithole, who founded The Touch of Power in Zimbabwe in 2015, spoke up for senior citizens at the World Forum on Energy Regulation in Cancun Mexico in 2018. She has attended forums in South Africa, Sweden and Indonesia.*

Beatrice Sithole's driving purpose right now is to help older people stretch their dollars. "So many of us are grannies parenting our orphaned grandchildren and struggling to put food on the table. The situation in Zimbabwe is dramatic. Our country is landlocked. We have been hit by three successive droughts and the economy is in serious difficulty. COVID is just the last straw!

This is the reality faced by Beatrice, our new country liaison for Zimbabwe. Five years ago, as a self-employed entrepreneur, she felt the need to do something positive with and for older people. She formed a Board of Trustees and they founded the Power of Touch Institution to reach out and help older people.

When asked about the name of her organization, she says that everyone has the power of choice and can exercise that choice to touch the lives of those around them, however small or large their circle of influence.

#### Seeking long term solutions

The Power of Touch (PoT) helps senior citizens stretch their dollars by partnering with service providers willing to offer discounted or free service. Unfortunately, COVID has shrunk the number of providers and funders. "It's nonstop struggle," she says, "but we've managed to deliver food - mostly maize and beans - and medicines to people. We know this is very short term. We absolutely must find ways of making us independent, by developing small vegetable growing enterprises and maybe raising chickens. "We count on the support of more than 3000 members of the Zimbabwean diaspora scattered around the world."



### Zimbabwe (continued)



PoT has an outreach program in the rural areas. "Times are hard," she says, "and people really appreciate getting together for some light relief and stimulation. We organize monthly meet-ups where we invite various speakers to talk about issues such as dementia, exercising, and healthy living. Afterward, we have tea and sometimes a fashion show."



The Power of Touch lobbies the government to listen to the voice of senior citizens in all sectors. PoT is also very hands-on, organizing courses for digital learning and mentoring. She explained, "I did a mentorship program with the Swedish Chamber of Commerce that resulted in an ongoing mentorship program. We select senior professionals and train them to mentor young people wanting to start their own businesses."

## COVID-19 Pandemic

### Lessons from the First Wave: Resilience in the Age of COVID-19



This is a must-read inspiring 100-page e-book packed with useful initiatives. Shareable is an award-winning non-profit action network, whose mission is to empower community sharing for a more resilient, equitable, and joyful world.

The e-book invites us to see fresh, no longer “taking things second or third hand.” We can take in the devastating loss of jobs, businesses, homes, and savings – all things we had worked tirelessly for. On the other hand, we can see that kindness, care, and cooperation are growing worldwide at the grassroots level like never before. We all can take part in the upswell! [You can download the e-book \(free\) here.](#)

When you look through the e-book, you will find many examples of useful community projects in countries around the world. The descriptions are linked to toolkits or websites where further descriptions are freely available for your use. Here are six examples of the good work going on:

1. A group of good samaritans using a 3D printer to make free respirator valves
2. Volunteer-based tutoring programs such as Teacher 2 Neighbor and Tutor.com
3. Reclaiming Work: The Cycle Couriers subverting the Gig Economy through new bike delivery cooperatives across Europe
4. A toolkit to find out how to build a phone tree.
5. New ROSCAs (Rotating Credit and Savings Associations) created by individuals who fill the role of informal financial institutions. These alternative financial vehicles are flourishing.
6. Tiny houses that are becoming increasingly popular, according to the Low Income Housing Institute. Advocates for the homeless and tiny house enthusiasts agree that downsizing is the best option for the times.

Look through the index in the linked e-book and find what interests you!

### Navigating Uncertain Times



Yes, times are uncertain, and we have no choice but to navigate them. Helen Dennis, our Pass It On Network advisor whose regular columns in the Los Angeles Times are read by millions, suggests a practical path to follow through this [Help Guide](#) that offers coping mechanisms.

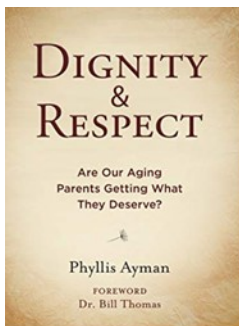
### UN's Policy Brief on COVID-19's Impact on older persons



Efforts to protect older persons should not overlook their capacity for resilience and positivity, according to the UN Secretary General's policy statement on the *Impact of COVID-19 on Older Persons*, signed by 146 nations.

[Read report.](#)

### COVID-19 — What it feels like inside nursing homes



Here is a [new publication](#) by a Pass It On Network associate who describes how it feels inside long term care facilities assaulted by COVID-19. Phyllis Ayman shows how the core values of respect and dignity are foundational to strategies for nursing home management that will help our future selves as well as current residents to achieve a greater sense of peace and contentment. Phyllis Ayman is a speech/language pathologist, certified dementia practitioner and

trainer, and holds a certification in Montessori for Dementia. The foreword for her book is written by [Dr Bill Thomas](#).

### Ageism Demands Action

Help Age made this [short video](#) to thank activists around the world exposing the ageism generated during the COVID-19 pandemic. Share and act.

## Pathways

### Ageing

#### This Strikes a Chord



Listen to this interesting on-demand lecture, [Music, Health and Well-Being: An Exploration of Music and Medicine](#) from the University of Toronto with thanks to Dr Carole-Lynne Le Navenec, our liaison in Calgary.

### Community

#### An avalanche of love letters melting isolation



Sisters Saffron and Shreya Patel created [Letters Against Isolation](#). Their energy has already attracted 3,000 volunteers and an astonishing 30,000 letters and cards filled with messages of love and hope that have found their way into the homes of older people in 20 US states and 2 Canadian provinces. Join in and spread the wealth!

### Work & Economic Security

#### Albania: Poverty eradication is an obligation



It was Mahatma Gandhi who said, "Poverty is the worst form of violence."

The Albanian Society for All Ages (ASAG) is the only voice for older women in Albania. Ermira Pirdeni, ASAG Executive Director, is appalled by how much COVID-19 has exacerbated what existed in a "prevailing culture of indifference" at the intersection of several crises: an ageing population, inequality, environmental degradation, rising insecurity, and poverty.

### Albania (continued)

Ermira says, "Older women are tired of talking. They want action. Our movement, created in 1991, generates much emotion but the results are scarce due to institutional indifference. We cannot remain indifferent when our pensions do not allow us to live a decent, dignified life." Two examples illustrate the dire situation many older women are facing: Virgjini Ristani (82) after working 50 years with the State Ensemble Folk Songs and Dances, receives a monthly pension of 170€ (US \$201); while Lirie Veliag (73), caregiver to her husband and sister (82), receives 70€ (US \$83). "Community development is needed to cure a society made sick by isolation, selfishness and rootlessness. Policy makers miss this simple idea," says Ermira.

Similar messages from other countries have led Moira and Jan to name Economic Security as the third of three priority action areas for the Pass It On Network beginning in 2021.

### Practical advice for branding yourself



Dorian Mintzer, Pass It On Network advisor, recently interviewed Wendy Marx (photo), a marketing and branding authority, on her popular international monthly program, [Revolutionize Retirement](#). Wendy shared [10 Essential Keys to Unlock Personal Branding for People over 50](#). You can listen to the full recording [here](#).

## Lifelong Learning

### UN Secretary General's Roadmap for Digital Inclusion and Collaboration



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This [report](#) examines recommendations on how the international community could work together to optimize the use of digital technologies. Here are the five recommendations: Build an inclusive digital economy and society; Develop human and institutional capacity; Protect human rights and human agency; Promote digital trust, security and stability; and Foster global digital cooperation.

The Pass It On Network has identified Digital Inclusion as the second of three priority action areas for the next few years.



## A treasure trove for expanding economic opportunity



Whether you live in Canada or elsewhere, [Prosper Canada](#) offers a treasure trove of information if you're interested in developing financial literacy. Founded in 1986, this national charity is dedicated to expanding economic opportunity through programs and policy innovation for Canadians living in poverty. Consider adapting their tool kits, webinars, facilitators' training and other aids for achieving financial security.

## Events

### It's the season for some creative energy



Register to view the award winning films in the **Peace in the Streets** Global Film Festival, at [psgff.eventcombo.com](https://psgff.eventcombo.com).

### Donate to Pass It On

Help support our positive ageing advocacy goals!

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