

# Preventing Elder Abuse and Promoting Social Justice through Inclusive Strategies for Elderly Well-Being



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# Preventing Elder Abuse and Promoting Social Justice through Inclusive Strategies for Elderly Well-Being



Research paper  
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This research report, *Preventing Elder Abuse and Promoting Social Justice through Inclusive Strategies for Elderly Well-Being*, is the result of collaborative efforts, thoughtful guidance, and the generous support of many individuals and institutions.

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This report is dedicated to all those working to protect the rights of older adults and to eliminate elder abuse in all its forms.



With profound gratitude,

**Md Atikur Rahman**  
**Chairman**

*Sustainable Disadvantaged Development Foundation- SDDF*

**Author and Editor**

*Research Report:*

***“Preventing Elder Abuse and Promoting Social Justice through Inclusive Strategies for Elderly Well-Being”***

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## ► Foreword

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We are honored to present this comprehensive study on elder abuse and the mechanisms required to prevent it, undertaken by the Sustainable Disadvantaged Development Foundation (SDDF). Addressing this issue is not merely a social obligation but a profound ethical responsibility. Aging is an inevitable stage in the human life cycle, and every individual will eventually experience it. Yet, it is deeply concerning that, in the context of globalization and rapid industrialization, older persons are increasingly subjected to neglect, marginalization, and abuse.

This reality compels us to act decisively. It is imperative for all stakeholders—governments, institutions, and communities—to unite in eradicating all forms of violence and discrimination against older adults, ensuring a dignified and fulfilling life for them. Our preliminary review of diverse scholarly resources and policy documents strongly reinforced the urgency of this work and inspired us to advocate for the rights and well-being of senior citizens.

### **The significance of this research is underscored by several critical factors:**

- **Demographic Shifts:** The global population is aging at an unprecedented rate, with profound implications for social and economic systems.
- **Rising Incidence of Abuse:** Reports of elder neglect and mistreatment are escalating, demanding immediate intervention.
- **Empowerment and Inclusion:** Promoting socio-economic participation and leadership among older persons is essential for sustainable development.

### **This study is distinctive in two key respects:**

1. It integrates national and international perspectives with robust theoretical frameworks.
2. It employs a systematic, evidence-based methodology—both quantitative and qualitative—ensuring reliability and authenticity in addressing the developmental needs of aging populations.

Our findings reveal a troubling decline in the quality of life for older individuals, emphasizing the urgent need for coordinated strategies that prioritize humanitarian values and sustainability. This research aims not only to highlight the challenges but also to propose actionable pathways for involving older persons in socio-economic development, thereby transforming them from passive recipients of care into active contributors to society.

## ► Executive Summary

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**Elderly** individuals are expected to receive respect, care, and dignity from their families and society. Unfortunately, the reality is starkly different: as people enter the later stages of life, they often face neglect, marginalization, and even abuse. Aging is an inevitable and universal process, yet older persons are increasingly deprived of the honor and security they deserve.

This study seeks to address this pressing issue by identifying strategies to prevent elder abuse and reintegrate older persons into the mainstream of society. The ultimate goal is to empower them to actively participate in national and international development initiatives, ensuring their inclusion as valuable contributors rather than passive dependents.

The research is structured into several key components to meet its objectives:

- **Situation Analysis:** An in-depth examination of the current socio-economic and psychological conditions of older persons, including the prevalence of abuse and neglect.
- **Policy Review:** A critical assessment of existing national and international policies, legal frameworks, and their

alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- **Methodological Approach:** A mixed-method design combining quantitative and qualitative techniques to ensure comprehensive and reliable findings.

The study employed **two primary methods:**

- **Quantitative Analysis:** A survey of 1500 respondents across two districts, with 872 responses analyzed as the representative sample.
- **Qualitative Analysis:** Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and expert interviews to enrich the findings with nuanced perspectives.

Key findings reveal alarming trends:

- **Mental Health:** 87% of older persons reported experiencing mental distress, and 95% expressed insecurity about their future. Mental health challenges often outweigh physical ailments in severity.
- **Dignity and Family Relations:** 50% of respondents rated their family relationships as moderate, while 2% reported being victims of domestic violence—a deeply concerning indicator of vulnerability.
- **Physical and Emotional Abuse:** Although 63% described family relationships as satisfactory, the evolving socio-economic landscape suggests an increasing risk of abuse and neglect in the near future.

The study also highlights systemic gaps in government and non-governmental support. While the Ministry of Social Welfare has initiated programs for senior citizens, these efforts remain insufficient to meet the growing needs of an aging population. Similarly, the limited involvement of NGOs and community-based organizations underscores the urgency for coordinated action.

The research concludes that loneliness, chronic illness, and socio-economic insecurity are critical factors exacerbating the vulnerability of older persons. It calls for immediate, collaborative interventions by government agencies, NGOs, and community organizations to safeguard the rights of older adults and integrate them into development processes. Empowering older persons is not only a moral imperative but also a strategic necessity for building an inclusive and sustainable society.

## SECTION A: INTRODUCTION & BASIC ORIENTATION

### Overview of the Elder Abuse

Elder abuse is a serious and growing global concern that undermines the dignity, safety, and well-being of older adults. It refers to any intentional act or negligent behavior by a caregiver or another individual that causes harm or poses a significant risk of harm to an elderly person. This abuse can manifest in multiple forms, including physical violence, emotional or psychological mistreatment, sexual exploitation, financial manipulation, neglect of basic needs, abandonment, and even self-neglect. Each of these forms not only violates fundamental human rights but also erodes the quality of life for older individuals.

The consequences of elder abuse are profound and far-reaching. Victims often experience severe physical injuries, chronic health problems, and psychological trauma such as depression, anxiety, and fear. In many cases, prolonged abuse leads to social isolation, loss of trust, and devastating financial hardship. Alarming, research indicates that long-term abuse can accelerate cognitive decline and, in extreme cases, contribute to premature death. Recognizing the warning signs—such as unexplained injuries, poor hygiene, sudden withdrawal from social activities, or unpaid bills despite adequate resources—is essential for timely intervention and prevention.

Addressing elder abuse requires a coordinated effort from families, communities, and institutions. It is not only a moral obligation but also a critical step toward building an inclusive and compassionate society where older adults can live with dignity, security, and respect.

### 1.1 Conception of Elder Abuse

**Elder** abuse is increasingly recognized as a critical and growing social problem worldwide. However, accurately determining its prevalence remains challenging due to factors such as underreporting, inconsistent definitions, and the absence of a standardized national reporting system. According to the National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA), elder abuse encompasses seven distinct categories: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, financial or material exploitation, neglect, abandonment, and self-neglect.

Every year, hundreds of thousands of older adults experience abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Many victims are frail, dependent, and unable to protect themselves, relying on others for their most basic needs. Perpetrators of elder abuse can be both men and women and often include family members, friends, caregivers, or other trusted individuals.

Broadly defined, elder abuse refers to any deliberate, intentional, or negligent act by a caregiver or any other person that causes harm or poses a serious risk of harm to a vulnerable older adult. While all 50 states in the United States have enacted legislation to prevent elder abuse, the definitions and legal interpretations vary significantly across jurisdictions. In general terms, abuse may be understood as any act or omission that violates an older person's rights, dignity, or well-being, resulting in physical, emotional, or financial harm.

**Definition:** Any act or omission that violates an older person's rights, dignity, or well-being, resulting in physical, emotional, or financial harm.

## 1.2 Types of Elder abuse

Type	Description
Physical Abuse	Inflicting pain, injury, slapping, bruising
Sexual Abuse	Non-consensual sexual contact of any kind
Neglect	Failure to provide food, shelter, healthcare, or protection
Emotional Abuse	Humiliation, intimidation, threats
Abandonment	Desertion by a responsible caregiver
Self-Neglect	Failure to perform essential self-care tasks
Financial Exploitation	Improper use of funds or assets

## 1.3 Common sign of elder abuse

Physical change	Appearance change	Mental change	Conviction
<input type="checkbox"/> Loses weight for no reason <input type="checkbox"/> Lack medical aids <input type="checkbox"/> Develop bed sores or other preventable conditions	<input type="checkbox"/> Looks messy <input type="checkbox"/> unwashed hair or dirty clothes <input type="checkbox"/> Has broken eyeglasses/frames	<input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn or acts agitated or violent <input type="checkbox"/> Hazardous <input type="checkbox"/> Stop taking part in activities he or she enjoys	<input type="checkbox"/> Display signs of insufficient care or unpaid bills despite adequate financial resources

## 1.4 Long-Term Effect of Abuse

- ❖ Elder abuse can lead to early death, harm to physical and psychological health
- ❖ To destroy social and family ties, cause devastating financial loss, and more.

- ❖ Any type of mistreatment can leave the abused person feeling fearful and depressed. Sometimes, the victim thinks the abuse is his or her fault.

### 1.5 Comparative Analysis of the Elderly Situation: Past and Present

Aspect	Before Aging	After Aging
<b>Social</b>	Strong community ties	Isolation and reduced participation
<b>Economic</b>	Active employment and financial role	Loss of income and dependency
<b>Physical</b>	Good health and mobility	Chronic illness and reduced fitness
<b>Mental</b>	Resilient and confident	Depression and anxiety
<b>Family Ties</b>	Strong relationships	Neglect and separation
<b>Oppression</b>	No oppression	Neglect and dissatisfaction
<b>Work &amp; Skill</b>	Skilled and productive	Need for decent work and support

#### 1: Elder Abuse



## SECTION B: LINKING SDGs WITH ELDERLY DEVELOPMENT AND PROTECTION

### OVERVIEW OF THE ELDERLY DEVELOPMENT

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are intrinsically linked to the well-being of older persons, addressing critical challenges such as poverty, malnutrition, and health vulnerabilities through targeted interventions. SDG 1: No Poverty promotes effective retirement policies, robust pension systems, social security, and training opportunities to extend work participation, alongside social assistance and family support services. SDG 2: Zero Hunger emphasizes nutritional security through disease prevention, health promotion, and access to treatment and rehabilitation, while SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being advocates for integrated healthcare systems, preventive and curative services, and mental health initiatives to foster active aging. Complementing these global goals, international and regional frameworks provide a strong policy foundation for elderly development. The United Nations has introduced landmark initiatives such as the Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing (1982), the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (2002), and the United Nations Principles for Older Persons (1991), all reinforcing social inclusion and health security. Regionally, the Macau Declaration and Macau Plan of Action on Ageing (1998) adapt these principles to Asia-Pacific contexts, while professional bodies like the ILO and the World Medical Association have issued critical recommendations, including the Older Workers Recommendation R162 (1980) and the Declaration on the Abuse of the Elderly (1989). Collectively, these strategies form a comprehensive framework to safeguard rights, enhance health, and ensure the active participation of older persons in sustainable development.

### 2.1 Sustainable development goals and the elderly development

There is a good interrelation between SDG and older development. However, the important relationship which is directly related to the older development is following below.

Sl.	SDG	How It Supports Elderly Development
01	<b>SDG 1: No Poverty</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Effective retirement policies</li><li>- Pension systems and social security</li><li>- Training for extended work opportunities</li><li>- Changing attitudes toward older workers</li><li>- Social assistance and care services</li><li>- Support for families caring for older members</li></ul>
02	<b>SDG 2: Zero Hunger</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Disease prevention and health promotion</li><li>- Access to treatment and rehabilitation</li></ul>

**03 SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being**

- Encouraging proper nutrition and healthy diets
- Developing robust, integrated healthcare systems
- Ensuring access to preventive and curative services
- Promoting mental health and active aging

**ELDERLY DEVELOPMENT & THE SDGs** LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

**WHY IT MATTERS**

By 2050, the global population aged 65 and older will outnumber youth aged 15-24

**KEY SDGs FOR ELDERLY DEVELOPMENT**

- 1 NO POVERTY**  
Social protection
- 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**  
Healthcare, healthy ageing
- 4 QUALITY EDUCATION**  
Lifelong learning
- 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**  
Employment opportunities
- 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES**  
Social, economic
- 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES & COMMUNITIES**  
Protection from abuse

**CHALLENGES**

- Poverty
- Health gaps
- Social, exclusion

**SOLUTIONS & ACTIONS**

- SOCIAL PROTECTION
- LIFELONG LEARNING
- AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES

**2.2 Global and Regional Frameworks on Aging**

The development and protection of older persons have long been recognized as global priorities, reflected in numerous international and regional policy frameworks. These documents provide guiding principles, action plans, and recommendations to ensure the dignity, rights, and well-being of older adults. Below is an overview of key initiatives categorized by their origin and implementing authority.

**Part A: United Nations Documents on Aging**

The United Nations has played a pivotal role in shaping global aging policies through comprehensive frameworks and principles. These documents emphasize social inclusion, health security, and active participation of older persons in development.

Sl.	Documentation	Year	Implementation Authority
A.1	Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing	1982	UN
A.2	Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing	2002	UN
A.3	United Nations Principles for Older Persons	1991	UN

### **Part B: Asia-Pacific Regional Frameworks**

Regional initiatives, particularly in Asia and the Pacific, have focused on adapting global principles to local contexts, addressing demographic transitions and cultural dynamics.

<b>Sl.</b>	<b>Documentation</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Implementation Authority</b>
<b>B.1</b>	Macau Declaration on Ageing for Asia and the Pacific	1998	ESCAP
<b>B.2</b>	Macau Plan of Action on Ageing for Asia and the Pacific	1998	ESCAP

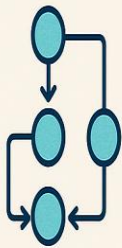
### **Part C: International NGOs and Professional Organizations**

Several international organizations and professional bodies have issued recommendations and declarations to safeguard older persons' rights and prevent abuse.

<b>Sl.</b>	<b>Documentation</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Implementation Authority</b>
<b>C.1</b>	ILO Older Workers Recommendation R162	1980	ILO
<b>C.2</b>	WMA Declaration on the Abuse of the Elderly	1989	World Medical Association

## SECTION C: METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN OF THE STUDY

# METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN OF THE STUDY



### STUDY DESIGN

Longitudinal study on elderly development



### PARTICIPANTS

1,500 older adults aged 60 and over



### DATA COLLECTION

Annual interviews and assessments



### MEASURES

Physical, cognitive, psychological, social

### OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY & DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This study adopts a **convergent mixed-methods approach**, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative techniques such as **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)** and **expert interviews** to capture both statistical evidence and contextual insights. Primary data were collected through structured and semi-structured questionnaires administered face-to-face at the community level, while secondary data were sourced from scholarly literature, policy documents, and research reports. The design addresses key objectives: assessing mental health and dignity-related issues, identifying patterns of physical and psychological abuse, mapping policy gaps, and exploring strategies to align sustainable development priorities with national and international frameworks. Data collection tools included validated checklists and interview guides, ensuring reliability and comparability. This integrated methodology provides a robust evidence base for actionable recommendations to prevent elder abuse and promote the social and economic reintegration of older persons.

## Methodology and Design of the Study — Overview

### 3.1 Objectives and significance of the study

#### Objectives

- Assess the **mental health status** of older persons.
- Examine **dignity-related dynamics** in interactions with neighbors and younger cohorts.
- Determine the **prevalence and patterns of physical and psychological abuse** experienced by older persons.
- Link **sustainable development priorities** with existing national and international **policies, plans, and legislation** to inform the **eradication of elder abuse**.
- Identify and propose **development tools and interventions** that can eliminate abuse and **reintegrate older persons** into mainstream social and economic life.

#### Significance

By combining empirical evidence with policy mapping, the study generates **actionable insights** for governments, NGOs, and community stakeholders to safeguard rights, strengthen services, and promote **inclusive, dignified aging**.

### 3.2 Research Question

- What is the **mental health status** of the elderly population?
- Which **plans, policies, and legal frameworks** at national and international levels currently address the needs of older persons?
- What **barriers** impede older persons' **socio-economic rights**, and where are the **policy and service gaps**?
- What **solutions** can overcome these challenges and close identified gaps?
- Which **methodologies and programmatic approaches** are most effective for **preventing elder abuse** and **engaging older persons** in development activities?

### 3.3 Methodology

A **convergent mixed-methods** approach is used. The **quantitative** component applies a structured survey to generate prevalence estimates and patterns. The **qualitative** component (FGDs and expert interviews) explores perceptions, lived experiences, social norms, service responsiveness, and implementation realities. Tools include **structured and semi-structured questionnaires, checklists, and protocols** designed for reliability and comparability across sites. The combined design enables **triangulation** and **contextual interpretation** of findings.

*Optional enhancements (recommended):* Specify the **sampling frame, sample size, site selection, ethical safeguards** (informed consent, confidentiality, referral pathways), and **data quality controls** (pilot testing, enumerator training, supervision).

### 3.3.1: Determining issues and sub-issues

The respective study authority is agreed to look into the following issues and sub-issues through this study. This is particularly developed on the basis of review of initial research and project documents and successive sharing and discussions with the respective authority.

#### Analytic Framework (Issues and Sub-Issues)

Category	Issues / Domains	Sub-Issues / Variables
General	Targeted population profile	Name (ID), age, marital status, occupation
Specific Issues	Mental torture / abuse	Types, alleged perpetrator(s), legal aid sought, barriers to reporting/action
Cross-cutting	Mental health	Forms of distress, contributing causes, duration/severity
Cross-cutting	Dignity and social relations	Family relationships; relations with neighbors/intergenerational dynamics; inclusion in events; experiences of misbehavior
Cross-cutting	Physical & psychological abuse	Occurrence, type(s), identification of perpetrator(s), reporting and legal response
Cross-cutting	Suggestions and feedback	Community, social, and economic measures to prevent violence and protect older persons

### 3.3.2: Sources of Data

The study relied on both primary and secondary data sources to ensure accuracy and depth. Primary data were collected directly from participants at the ground level through face-to-face interactions, enabling the capture of firsthand insights and experiences. Secondary data were obtained through an extensive review of relevant literature, including scholarly journals, research reports, and other credible publications, providing theoretical support and contextual understanding for the study.

### 3.3.3: Data Collection Method

Category	Details
Primary Data	Collected at the ground level through face-to-face interactions with participants
Secondary Data	Derived from literature reviews, scholarly journals, and research reports

### 3.3.4: Data Collection Plan

#### Data Collection Plan

To explore the role of media in shaping intergenerational relationships and empowering older persons, the study focused on several key objectives and issues. The primary objective was to understand the factors influencing self-respect among older adults and how these factors contribute to stronger intergenerational bonds. Specific issues examined included family relationships, incidents of domestic violence, and interactions with neighbors and younger community members. Data were collected to assess whether family members respect the rights and responsibilities of older persons, whether any form of domestic violence occurs, and whether older individuals experience satirical or disrespectful behavior from neighbors or juniors. To achieve these objectives, surveys and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were employed as the primary methods of data collection.

#### Data Collection Strategy (Matrix)

Objective	Issues	Data to be Collected	Methods
To identify self-respect factors that strengthen intergenerational relations	Relationship with family	Whether family members respect rights and responsibilities of older persons	Survey and FGD interviews
	Home violence	Whether any form of domestic violence occurs between elderly and family members	Same as above
	Relationship with neighbors and juniors	Whether neighbors or juniors exhibit satirical or disrespectful behavior toward elders	Same as above

### 3.3.5: Concepts & Definitions

- **Elder Development:** A coordinated process that secures socio-economic rights for older persons through systematic, disciplined interventions.
- **Ageing:** The time-linked accumulation of structural and functional changes in an organism, typically associated with declining fertility and physiological capacity over the life course.
- **Qualitative Method:** An approach that collects and analyzes non-numerical evidence (e.g., text, audio, video) to understand meanings, experiences, and social processes, and to generate in-depth insights.

- **Quantitative Method:** An approach emphasizing objective measurement and statistical analysis of numerical data (e.g., surveys, polls, administrative datasets) to test patterns and relationships.
- **Decent Work:** Productive employment that provides fair income, workplace security, social protection, opportunities for development and social inclusion, and respect for rights.
- **Elder Empowerment:** The process by which older persons gain opportunities to learn, deliberate, decide, and act on matters affecting their lives.
- **Elder Abuse:** Any act or omission—intentional or negligent—that causes harm or poses serious risk of harm to an older person’s physical, psychological, or economic well-being.
- **Data Collection:** The systematic procedure for gathering, measuring, and analyzing information using validated methods to produce accurate, reliable evidence.
- **Coordination and Collaboration:** Inter-organizational processes that align stakeholders, link plans/policies across levels, and respond to identified needs of target populations to achieve research goals.
- **Life Cycle:** The sequence of stages through which a person, product, or system progresses—from inception and growth to maturity and eventual decline.

## SECTION D: ANALYSIS OF SOCIO-ECONOMI FACTORS AND STRTEGIES FOR ELDER PROTECTION

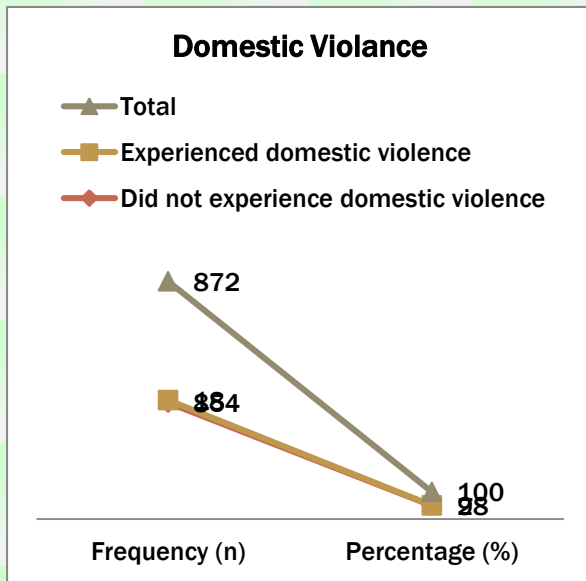
### OVERVIEW OF DATA ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY

This study employed a mixed-methods design, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to examine socio-economic factors influencing the well-being of older persons. A total of 872 respondents aged 60–104 participated, with the majority (46%) in the 60–64 age group. Findings indicate a low prevalence of domestic violence (2%) and oppression (2%), though negative behaviors from neighbors—such as quarreling (50%) and verbal abuse (33%)—were notable. Most respondents reported satisfactory family relationships (63%), yet 36% provided no response, suggesting possible emotional distance. Neighbors emerged as the primary source of oppression (47%), followed by family members (26%). While 37% of victims pursued legal action, 63% refrained, primarily due to mental weakness (83%) and physical disability (17%). These results underscore the need for systemic safeguards, community-based elder protection programs, legal literacy initiatives, and integrated mental health and mobility support to enhance elder care and reduce vulnerability.

#### 4.1: The study settings

This study employed a **mixed-methods design**, integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches to capture a comprehensive understanding of elder issues. The analysis focused on key socio-economic factors, including educational status, living arrangements, companionship, and environmental conditions, to assess the overall well-being of older persons. Understanding these dimensions is essential for evaluating the socio-economic status of the aging population and identifying vulnerabilities. The study included **872 respondents aged 60 to 104 years**, with the largest proportion (46%) in the 60–64 age group, followed by 26% in the 65–69 range. The smallest representation (1%) was observed among those aged 95–99 and 100–104. The significance of this research is underscored by the growing global discourse on aging, particularly highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic, which revealed the urgent need for enhanced care and protection of senior citizens to mitigate future social and economic risks.

## 4.2: Data presentation and analysis

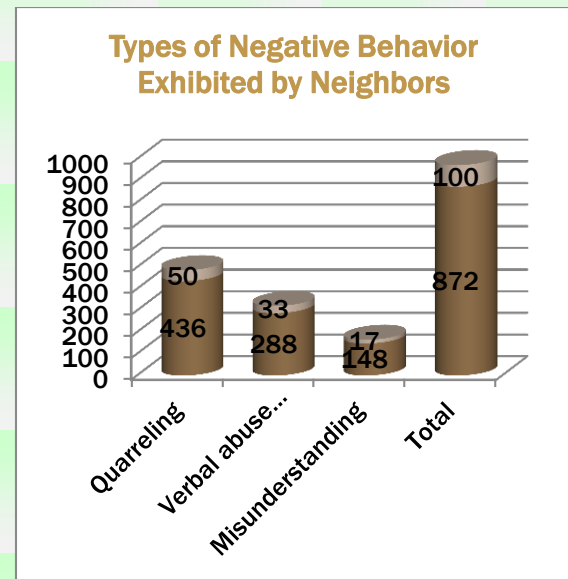


**FIGURE 1: PREVALENCE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG SENIOR CITIZENS**

**□ Interpretation:** The data suggests a low prevalence of domestic violence among senior citizens, with 854 out of 872 respondents reporting no such experience.

**◆ Strategic Implication:** The 18 affected individuals represent a vulnerable group requiring targeted support.

**□ Recommendation:** Implement community-based elder protection programs and regular monitoring.

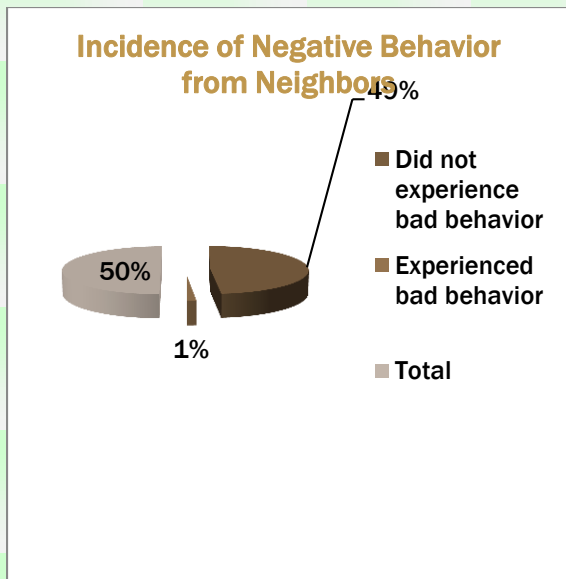


**FIGURE 2: TYPES OF NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR EXHIBITED BY NEIGHBORS**

**□ Interpretation:** Quarreling is the most common form of negative behavior, followed by verbal abuse and misunderstandings.

**◆ Strategic Implication:** These behaviors may affect elders' mental well-being even if not legally classified as abuse.

**□ Recommendation:** Promote neighborhood mediation and elder-friendly community engagement.



**FIGURE 3: INCIDENCE OF NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR FROM NEIGHBORS**

**□ Interpretation:** Most elders report respectful treatment from neighbors, though a small group faces challenges.

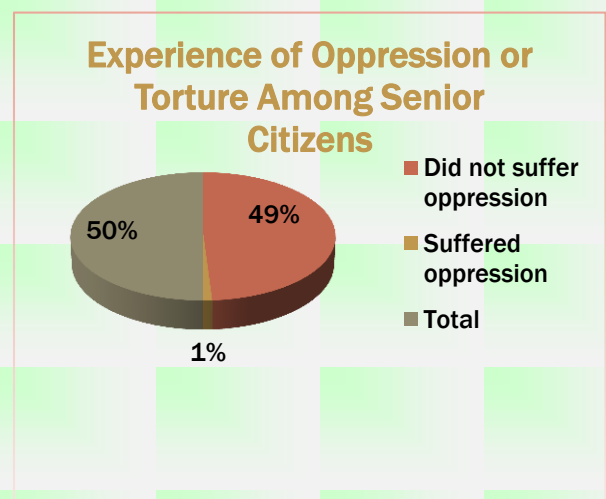
**◆ Strategic Implication:** Even low incidence warrants attention to prevent escalation.

**□ Recommendation:** Establish anonymous reporting and community awareness programs.

**□ Interpretation:** While most relationships are satisfactory, the high rate of unspecified responses may indicate emotional distance or reluctance to disclose.

**◆ Strategic Implication:** Emotional neglect may be underreported.

**□ Recommendation:** Include qualitative interviews and family counseling in elder care programs.

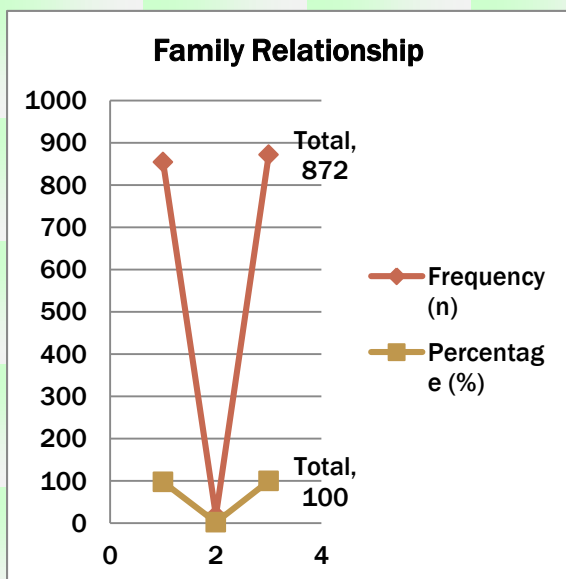


**FIGURE 5: EXPERIENCE OF OPPRESSION OR TORTURE**

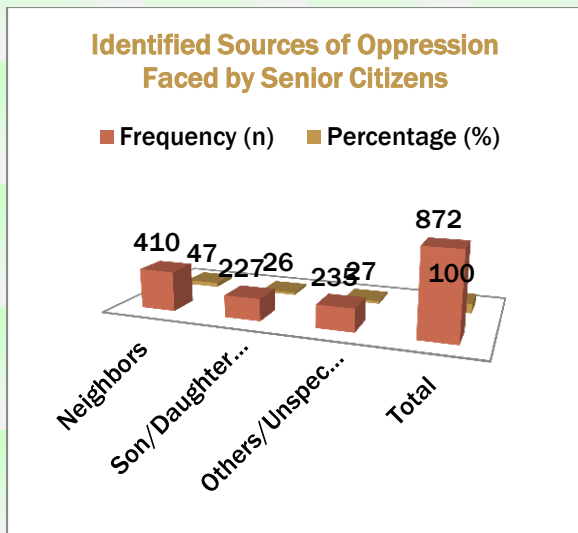
**□ Interpretation:** The low incidence of oppression aligns with domestic violence findings.

**◆ Strategic Implication:** Even isolated cases require systemic safeguards.

**□ Recommendation:** Strengthen legal frameworks and support services for elder abuse victims.



**FIGURE 4: QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP WITH FAMILY MEMBERS**



**FIGURE 6: IDENTIFIED SOURCES OF OPPRESSION**

□ **Interpretation:** Neighbors are the most frequently identified oppressors, followed by close family members.

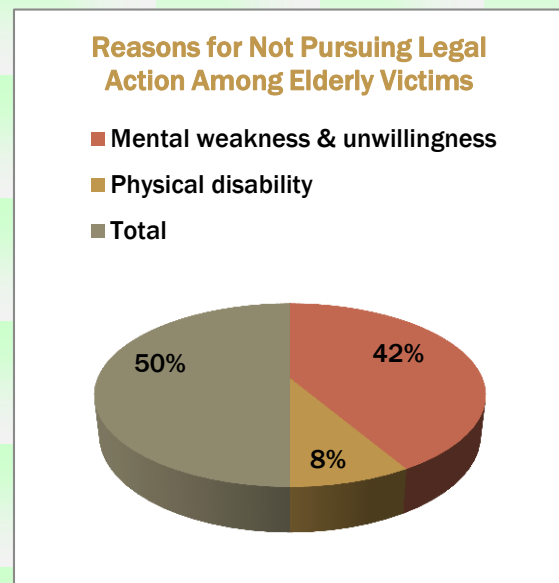
◆ **Strategic Implication:** Abuse extends beyond domestic settings into community interactions.

□ **Recommendation:** Expand elder protection policies to include neighborhood accountability.

□ **Interpretation:** A majority of victims refrained from legal action, possibly due to fear or dependency.

◆ **Strategic Implication:** Legal inaction may perpetuate abuse.

□ **Recommendation:** Launch legal literacy campaigns and provide free legal aid.

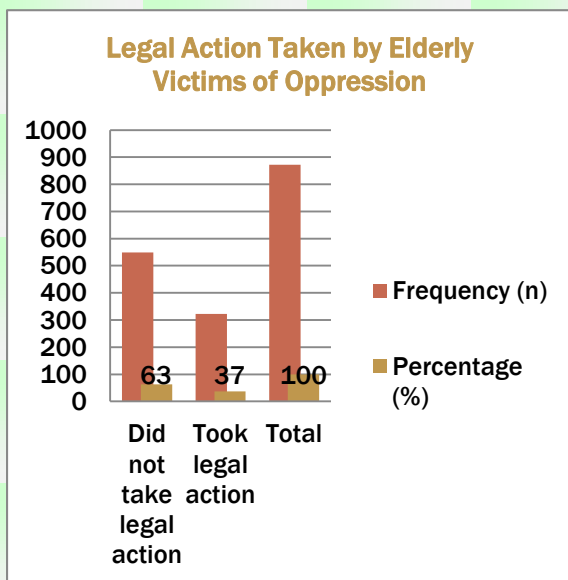


**FIGURE 8: REASONS FOR NOT PURSUING LEGAL ACTION**

□ **Interpretation:** Psychological barriers are the dominant reason for legal inaction, followed by physical limitations.

◆ **Strategic Implication:** Emotional vulnerability and disability hinder justice access.

□ **Recommendation:** Integrate mental health support and mobility assistance into elder care services.



**FIGURE 7: LEGAL ACTION TAKEN BY VICTIMS**

# THE KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION ELDERLY DEVELOPMENT

## KEY FINDINGS



### Aging Population Growth

The elderly population is rapidly increasing



### Health Challenges

Older adults face rising rates of chronic diseases



### Lifelong Learning

Senior education programs are underutilized



### Social Isolation

Many elderly individuals experience loneliness



## RECOMMENDATION

It is essential to promote active aging initiatives focused on health, learning, and social inclusion for the elderly.

## OVERVIEW OF THE KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

This study explores the social and familial experiences of senior citizens, focusing on domestic safety, community behavior, and legal responses to abuse. Findings indicate that 98% of seniors did not experience domestic violence, though the 2% who did remain highly vulnerable. While 63% reported satisfactory family relationships, emotional neglect and strained ties persist for others. Community interactions are generally positive, yet subtle issues such as quarrels, verbal abuse, and misunderstandings affect a minority, with neighbors identified as primary oppressors in 47% of cases. Alarming, 63% of victims avoided legal action due to mental weakness, unwillingness, or physical disability, highlighting barriers to justice. Socio-economic challenges further compound vulnerability: 87% reported psychological distress, 95% felt insecure about the future, and

83% faced financial stress. Despite 94% receiving respect from children, nearly half experienced strained relationships or verbal abuse, and 46% were excluded from family events due to financial

constraints. These findings underscore the urgent need for integrated strategies, including elder protection units, legal literacy and mental health programs, and inclusive community engagement to safeguard dignity, well-being, and legal empowerment for older persons.

## 5.1 Discussion

This study provides a comprehensive overview of the social and familial experiences of senior citizens, with a particular focus on domestic violence, neighborhood interactions, and legal responses to oppression. The findings reveal a generally positive environment for the elderly, but also highlight critical areas that require strategic intervention.

### Domestic Safety and Family Dynamics

The data indicates that **98% of senior citizens did not experience domestic violence**, suggesting a strong cultural or familial respect for elders. However, the **2% who did face abuse** represent a vulnerable group that may be overlooked in broader policy frameworks. Similarly, **63% of respondents reported satisfactory relationships with their families**, while **36% did not specify**, raising concerns about emotional neglect or unspoken tensions. These findings underscore the need for **regular psychosocial assessments** and **family counseling programs** to ensure holistic elder care.

### Community Behavior and Social Inclusion

While **97% of respondents did not report bad behavior from neighbors**, the subset that did identified **quarreling (50%)**, **verbal abuse (33%)**, and **misunderstanding (17%)** as common issues. This suggests that although overt hostility is rare, **subtle forms of social exclusion or disrespect** persist. The fact that **neighbors were identified as the primary oppressors (47%)** further emphasizes the importance of **community-level interventions**, such as elder-friendly public spaces and neighborhood mediation initiatives.

### Legal Inaction and Vulnerability

A significant concern arises from the finding that **63% of elderly victims did not take legal action** against their oppressors. The primary reasons cited were **mental weakness and unwillingness (83%)**, followed by **physical disability (17%)**. These barriers reflect a broader issue of **legal inaccessibility and psychological vulnerability** among the elderly. Without adequate support, these individuals remain at risk of continued abuse and social isolation.

## Strategic Implications

The study highlights several strategic gaps:

- **Underreporting and emotional silence** among elders, especially in family contexts.
- **Limited community accountability**, despite the presence of neighbor-related conflicts.
- **Barriers to justice**, including psychological and physical limitations.

To address these challenges, the following strategies are recommended:

1. **Establish elder protection units** within local governance structures to monitor and respond to abuse.
2. **Implement legal literacy and mental health programs** tailored for senior citizens.
3. **Promote inclusive community engagement**, ensuring that elders are active participants in neighborhood life.

## 5.2: KEY FINDINGS

Key findings are an important part to understand the situation of the elderly. However the key findings have been discussed on the following.

### Socio-Economic Status and Key Findings

The study examined multiple dimensions of socio-economic well-being among older persons, focusing on mental health, dignity, and exposure to physical or psychological abuse. Findings reveal that mental distress is a critical concern, with **87%** of respondents reporting psychological strain, **95%** expressing insecurity about the future, and **83%** citing financial stress as a major factor. Dignity-related issues also emerged prominently: while **94%** receive respect from their children, nearly **50%** experience strained family relationships, and **47%** report verbal abuse. Social inclusion remains uneven, as **87%** are invited to family events, yet **46%** cannot participate due to financial constraints. Interpersonal relations beyond the household are similarly fragile, with **54%** maintaining cordial ties with neighbors, while **50%** report conflicts. Although only **2%** reported severe physical abuse, qualitative evidence indicates widespread psychological harm through bitter speech, quarrels, and neglect. Alarmingly, **63%** of victims did not pursue legal action, citing barriers such as mental weakness, disability, and reliance on informal arbitration, which often fails to deliver justice. These findings underscore the urgent need for integrated interventions addressing mental health, social dignity, and legal empowerment of older persons.

**Table 1: Socio-Economic and Abuse Indicators**

Domain	Key Findings	Interpretation
<b>Mental Health</b>	87% report mental distress; 95% fear future insecurity; 83% face financial stress; 7% fear persecution	Mental distress is more pervasive than physical issues, driven by insecurity and financial strain
<b>Dignity</b>	50% report moderate family relations; 2% face domestic violence; 47% experience verbal abuse; 94% receive respect from children	Ethical and moral decline contributes to disrespect; financial limits restrict participation
<b>Social Relations Abuse</b>	54% maintain ties with neighbors; 50% report conflicts 2% report physical abuse; 47% of abuse cases involve neighbors	Urban-rural differences influence social cohesion Psychological abuse (verbal aggression, neglect) is more prevalent than physical abuse
<b>Legal Action</b>	63% did not seek legal recourse; 83% rely on informal arbitration	Barriers include unwillingness, mental weakness, and lack of accessible mechanisms

### 5.3: Recommendation

Based on the study findings, the following strategic recommendations are proposed to enhance the **well-being, safety, and social inclusion** of older persons:

#### 1. Strengthen Community-Based Elder Protection

- Establish **local elder support centers** offering counseling, mediation, and emergency assistance.
- Train **community volunteers and local leaders** to identify and respond to signs of abuse or neglect.

#### 2. Promote Legal Awareness and Accessibility

- Implement **legal literacy campaigns** to educate older persons about their rights and available remedies.
- Provide **free or subsidized legal aid services** tailored to elderly victims of abuse.

#### 3. Integrate Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

- Develop **mental health outreach programs** addressing emotional vulnerability, isolation, and trauma.
- Include **psychological assessments** in routine elder care to detect early signs of distress.

#### 4. Encourage Family Engagement and Counseling

- Facilitate **family counseling sessions** to strengthen intergenerational relationships and resolve conflicts.
- Promote **positive family dynamics** through awareness campaigns and community workshops.

#### 5. Improve Data Collection and Monitoring

- Conduct **regular surveys and qualitative studies** to uncover hidden or underreported cases of abuse.

- Develop a **centralized database** to track incidents, legal actions, and outcomes.

## 6. Foster Inclusive Neighborhood Environments

- Organize **elder-friendly community activities** to reduce isolation and strengthen social bonds.
- Implement **neighborhood watch programs** with elder safety as a core component.

## 7. Address Physical and Mobility Barriers

- Ensure **public and legal institutions are physically accessible** to persons with disabilities.
- Provide **transportation and mobility assistance** for elderly individuals seeking legal or medical support.

**Table 2: Contextual Insights from Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis**

Context	Survey Responses (n=872)	Expert/FGD Insights
<b>A. Socio-Economic Perspective</b>		
<b>Change societal attitudes</b>	405	Preserving elder rights is an ethical and humanitarian responsibility for all.
<b>Mental attitude of children</b>	589	Marriage often shifts attitudes; ethical and social reforms are needed.
<b>Education for children</b>	436	Education should foster empathy and moral responsibility; government must lead efforts.
<b>Enhance social assistance</b>	634	Collective action is essential to support older persons.
<b>Improve social systems</b>	200	Create elder-friendly environments for leadership and decision-making roles.
<b>Social reform</b>	106	Immediate action is required to prevent future crises in elder care.
<b>Intergenerational coordination</b>	—	Building intergenerational solidarity is critical for sustaining elder rights.
<b>B. Social Justice Perspective</b>		
<b>Improve legal aid system</b>	364	Laws and policies must be more accessible and elder-friendly.
<b>Ensure punishment for abuse</b>	421	Legal enforcement is essential to deter violations of elder rights.
<b>Promote social justice</b>	364	Public awareness and equitable systems are key to protecting older persons.
<b>Enhance government facilities</b>	405	Services should be comprehensive, responsive, and inclusive.
<b>Age-friendly policies</b>	165	Legislation and planning must prioritize elder needs and eliminate systemic oppression.

## SECTION F: CONCLUSION

### OVERVIEW OF THE CONCLUSION

This chapter highlights the complex realities of aging, emphasizing both positive family and community relationships and the persistent challenges of abuse, neglect, and social isolation faced by some elderly individuals. It underscores the critical need to address psychological and social barriers that deter victims from seeking justice, particularly among those with mental or physical limitations. The findings call for integrated support systems combining legal, social, and psychological services, alongside community-based strategies to create elder-sensitive environments. The discussion also stresses the importance of intergenerational collaboration, robust age-friendly policies, and effective enforcement of laws such as the Parent Maintenance Act 2013, whose compoundable nature currently limits accountability. Advocacy through mass awareness campaigns and evidence-based research is identified as essential for fostering respect, ensuring dignity, and shaping sustainable interventions. Ultimately, the well-being of older persons is framed as a benchmark of societal maturity and ethical governance.

This study offers a nuanced understanding of the lived experiences of senior citizens, particularly in relation to domestic safety, community interactions, and access to justice. The findings reveal that while the majority of elderly individuals enjoy respectful relationships within their families and communities, a small yet significant portion continues to face challenges such as domestic violence, verbal abuse, and social neglect.

The data underscores the importance of not only recognizing the visible indicators of elder abuse but also addressing the underlying psychological and social barriers that prevent victims from seeking help. The reluctance to pursue legal action—primarily due to mental weakness and disability—highlights the urgent need for integrated support systems that combine legal, psychological, and social services.

Moreover, the role of neighbors as both companions and potential oppressors points to the complexity of community dynamics. This duality necessitates a strategic shift toward fostering inclusive, elder-sensitive environments that promote dignity, safety, and active participation.

In conclusion, while the overall landscape appears positive, the presence of even isolated cases of abuse and neglect calls for proactive policy measures, community engagement, and continuous monitoring. Ensuring the well-being of senior citizens is not merely a social responsibility—it is a reflection of societal maturity and ethical governance.

## Integrated Responsibilities Overview

Ensuring the rights and dignity of older persons requires a multi-dimensional approach involving intergenerational collaboration, policy implementation, advocacy, and research. Strengthening intergenerational linkages is essential, as aging issues are highly sensitive and cannot be addressed by older individuals alone without family and community support. Implementing age-friendly policies and legislation, such as the *Parent Maintenance Act 2013*, is critical; however, its compoundable nature limits punitive measures, allowing offenders to escape accountability through negotiation. Advocacy through mass campaigns—via drama, print, and electronic media—can raise awareness and foster social responsibility across all segments of society. Finally, comprehensive and applied research on contemporary aging issues is vital to develop evidence-based interventions that ensure sustainable improvements in the lives of older persons.

**Table 3: Responsibilities and Comments**

Responsibility	Comments
Strengthen Intergenerational Linkages	Create effective connections between generations through organizational approaches to safeguard elder rights.
Implement Age-Friendly Policies & Laws	The <i>Parent Maintenance Act 2013</i> is compoundable, allowing negotiation and limiting punitive enforcement.
Conduct Advocacy & Awareness Campaigns	Mass campaigns via drama, print, and media should engage all social groups to promote respect for elders.
Undertake Comprehensive Research	In-depth and applied research on contemporary issues is essential to design evidence-based interventions.

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## Annex 2: Questionnaire Form

### Research Questionnaire

**Topic:** Preventing Elder Abuse and Promoting Social Justice through Inclusive Strategies for Elderly Well-Being

**Implemented by:** Sustainable Disadvantaged Development Foundation (SDDF)

#### Purpose of the Study

This research focuses on individuals aged 60 years and above to understand their socio-economic status and experiences related to dignity, safety, and well-being. The findings will help SDDF design inclusive development programs and preventive strategies for elder abuse in the coming years. All information collected will be used solely for developmental purposes. If participants wish to keep their identity confidential, SDDF will assign a pseudonym to ensure privacy.

#### Guidelines for Data Enumerators

- Obtain informed consent before taking any photographs.
- Ensure all questions are answered without skipping any section.
- Use a pen to fill out the form clearly and accurately.
- For any clarification, contact the SDDF office immediately.
- Maintain respectful and courteous behavior at all times to make participants feel comfortable.

#### 1. General Information

Sl.	Specific Subject	Answer
1.1	Sample No.	
1.2	Participant's Name	
1.3	Survey Area	
1.4	Address	
1.5	Contact Number	
1.6	Date and Time	
1.7	Enumerator's Signature	

#### 2. Dignity and Social Relations

Sl.	Question	Options / Codes
2.1	How is your relationship with your family?	① Very Bad ② Bad ③ Moderate ④ Good ⑤ Very Good
2.2	Do you experience any family violence?	① Yes ② No
2.3	If yes, what type?	① Beating ② Controlling Money ③ Insulting ④ Threats ⑤ Others
2.4	Do your children respect you?	① Yes ② No
2.5	Are you invited to family events?	① Yes ② No
2.6	If no, why?	① No Money ② Considered Burden ③ Not Necessary ④ Hesitation
2.7	How do neighbors treat you?	① Very Bad ② Bad ③ Moderate ④ Good ⑤ Very Good
	If bad, what type of	Quarreling / Verbal Abuse /

	behavior?	Beating / Misunderstanding / Others
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### 3. Physical and Mental Abuse

Sl.	Question	Options / Codes
3.1	How does your family behave with you?	① Very Bad ② Bad ③ Moderate ④ Good ⑤ Very Good
3.2	Do you suffer any physical or mental abuse?	① Yes ② No
3.3	Who is the oppressor?	① Son ② Husband ③ Wife ④ Neighbors ⑤ Relatives ⑥ Others
3.4	Did you take legal action?	① Yes ② No
3.5	If no, why?	① Lack of Security ② Unwillingness ③ Mental Weakness ④ Disability ⑤ Others
3.6	Do you want to take legal action?	① Yes ② No

### 4. Expectations and Suggestions

Please share your ideas on how elder abuse can be prevented in the future:

*Thank you very much for your kind cooperation!*

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## Annex- 3: Checklist & Guidance for Focus Group Discussion

### Guidance for Conducting FGDs

#### 1. Venue Selection

- Choose a village with the **highest concentration of elderly participants**, based on the prepared list and survey coverage.

#### 2. Participants

- Ideal group size: **6 to 8 participants**.
- Ensure **gender balance** (equal number of men and women).
- Prefer participants with **similar age range and socio-economic background** for homogeneity.

#### 3. Resource Persons

- At least **one Research Assistant** should facilitate the discussion.
- Assign **one volunteer** to document proceedings and act as a **gatekeeper**.

#### 4. Recording

- **Audio-record the entire discussion** after obtaining informed consent.
- Clearly explain the **purpose of the research** and seek permission before recording.

#### 5. Photography

- Capture **1–2 quality photos** during the session (preferably mid-discussion).
- Obtain **consent from participants** before taking photos.

#### 6. Duration

- Each FGD should last a **maximum of one hour**.

## Annex 4: FGD Checklist

### Key Discussion Areas for Elder Abuse Research

#### 1. Socio-Economic Status Analysis

- Conduct a comparative assessment of socio-economic conditions **before aging and at present**.
- Explore changes in income, employment, and living standards.
- Examine **family relationships**, recreational opportunities, and overall quality of life.

#### 2. Mental Violence and Psychological Well-being

- Identify **types of mental abuse** experienced by older persons (from family, neighbors, or others).
- Analyze **mental distress**, its root causes, and its impact on **social and family life**.

#### 3. Social Dignity and Respect

- Assess the **status of dignity and respect before and after aging**.
- Determine whether dignity has **increased or decreased**, and identify contributing factors.
- Evaluate **social attitudes toward aging**, including perceptions from neighbors, peers, and younger generations.

#### 4. Physical and Mental Abuse

- Document **types of physical and psychological abuse** faced by older persons.
- Identify **perpetrators (oppressors)** and examine whether victims sought **legal aid or support services**.

#### 5. Opinions and Recommendations

- Gather **feedback and practical suggestions** from participants on strategies to **reduce elder abuse** and promote a safer, more respectful environment for older persons.

## Annex- 5: Guidelines for Conducting Expert Interviews

### 1. Area & Number

- Conduct **4–5 expert interviews** at the **center level**.

### 2. Participants

- Select **experts, academics, and policymakers** as interviewees to ensure informed perspectives.

### 3. Recording

- **Audio-record the entire interview** after obtaining informed consent.
- Clearly explain the **purpose of the research** and seek permission before recording.

### 4. Photography

- Capture **1–2 quality photos** during the interview (preferably mid-session).
- Obtain **consent for photography** in advance.
- Avoid reading questions directly from the questionnaire; prepare thoroughly beforehand.

### 5. Duration

- Each interview should last **30–40 minutes maximum**.

### Checklist for Discussion Points

- **Opinions and views on activities to prevent elder abuse.**
- **Perspectives on existing institutions, services, and processes related to older persons.**
- **Feedback on complaint submission and resolution mechanisms for senior citizens.**
- **Recommendations for effective planning, policy, and legislation for the elderly.**

## SDDF | RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT

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### PREVENTING ELDER ABUSE AND PROMOTING SOCIAL JUSTICE THROUGH INCLUSIVE STRATEGIES FOR ELDERLY WELL-BEING

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#### Our Mission

To ensure dignity, safety, and equal rights for every elderly person through advocacy, policy implementation, and community empowerment.



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*Together for Dignity, Safety, and Justice for Every Elderly Person*

Thank you for your attention to this research. Your engagement is vital in advancing dignity, safety, and social justice for older persons.