

GAROP Annual Summary

May 2021 - April 2022



About GAROP

Established in 2011, the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People (GAROP) was born out of the need to strengthen the rights and voice of older people globally. The membership of GAROP is open to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) who support GAROP's mission, vision and values and comply with the relevant member application process.

GAROP's work is guided by the following Mission, Vision and Values:

- GAROP's Mission is to support and enhance civil society's engagement at national, regional and international levels on the need for a new international instrument on the rights of older people. The main focus for this engagement is the UN Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing process (OEWG).
- GAROP's Vision is a world in which older people live free from discrimination and are able to fully enjoy their rights.
- GAROP's Values are partnership with, inclusion of, and the promotion of participation by older people in decisions that affect their lives. We respect the rights of all persons regardless of age, race, color, disability, gender, language, religion, sexual orientation, political views, national or social origin, class and birth or property status.

Collective advocacy and coordination

GAROP members are now more visible and vocal than ever before in their advocacy for a UN convention from local to national and global levels. Here are examples of how we have maintained and stepped up our reach and impact over the period April 2021-April 2022:

- With support from the IFA for bursaries for our members, GAROP organised two workshops at the IFA Global Conference on Ageing in November 2021 with members from Bangladesh, Canada, Costa Rica and Tanzania emphasising the need for a human rights-based approach and sharing their national experiences and campaigning stories with the delegates from around the world.
- Our Secretariat and Steering Group collaborated with National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) to develop an [Open Letter to the UN Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing](#) (OEWG) presenting a series of recommendations about how to move the process forward. It was launched at the Human Rights Council (HRC) 48th session in September 2021 with around 220 signatories, which increased to over 300 by the 12th OEWG session.
- GAROP was also visible at the UN Commission on the Status of Women for the first time in March 2022 in a parallel event co-organised with and sponsored by the Soroptimist International (see flyer below).

- During Autumn 2021 GAROP organised virtual booths at the IFA Global Conference on Ageing 2021, the ASEM Forum on the Human Rights of Older Persons Present and Future, and the Ministerial Conference on Demographic Resilience: Shaping Europe's Demographic Future co-organized by UNFPA and Bulgaria. This enabled us to raise awareness of the Age With Rights campaign with new audiences and share key materials and resources about older people's human rights.
- The GAROP Secretariat coordinated a drafting process with members through February and March 2022 to produce a [joint GAROP statement](#) that was presented at the 12th OEWG session in April 2022. To support coordination and alignment of messaging, the Secretariat and Steering Group also coordinated an online preparatory workshop with support from our member, International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA), for accredited NGOs and NHRIs during the week prior to the OEWG session.

OLDER WOMEN'S UNIVERSAL RIGHT TO ECONOMIC SECURITY

CSW 66 PARALLEL EVENT MARCH 24, 2022 - 2 P.M. - 3:30 P.M. EDT (NEW YORK)/ 6 P. M. GMT/ 7 P.M. CET

				
SHARON FISHER Soroptimist International Moderator	KEN BLUESTONE AGE International	IRENA NIOLLE DIS-MOI, Mauritius	AYUSHI KUNDU BOSE Soroptimist International	AMAL ABOU RAFAH UN Programme on Ageing, Dept. of Economic & Social Affairs



Soroptimist International
"Road to Equality"



"Age with Rights"

Age With Rights campaign

Since the 11th OEWG session in April 2021, our [Age With Rights campaign](#) has grown from strength to strength and has helped us to connect to new allies and create powerful partnerships with other human rights constituencies, including the Soroptimist International and Outright International. We issued a call for video statements across our membership and promoted over [20 new videos](#) from activists around the world on the International Day of Older Persons in October 2021. This helped to amplify the voices of older activists and other advocates and strengthen our collective call for a new UN convention.

In December 2021, we secured sponsorship funding from the Soroptimist International to support the further development of the campaign and our first [Global Rally](#) in March www.rightsofolderpeople.org

2022. This funding was critical in enabling us to provide high quality campaign graphics and materials as part of two social media toolkits for both the [Global Rally](#) and the [12th OEWG session](#).

Global Rally highlights



Events and activities took place in at least 31 countries in all regions of the world and there were at least 7 international thematic events, all featured on the Global Rally website.



Many diverse themes were covered, from dementia, ageism, the right to work and participation, widowhood, and intersecting discrimination such as older LGBTI+ people and older women.



Rally campaign organisers included GAROP members and other NGOs plus other stakeholders, including National Human Rights Institutions. The Rally presented an important opportunity to build new partnership and allies.



More than 800 people that we are aware of engaged in some way with the various events and activities around the world and the actual number is probably higher.



Between February and April 2022 up to and around the 12th OEWG session the campaign reached an estimated 4.8 million people on social media. The two weeks up to and around the Global Rally reached 1.2 million people.



Almost 10,000 people interacted with the campaign and #AgeWithRights hashtag on social media and there were also examples of print media, radio and TV coverage in a number of countries.

National case study

Beatrice Sithole of Power of Touch in Zimbabwe is a member of Pass It On Network and participated as a campaigner in the Age With Rights video campaign ahead of the UN Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing session in April 2021. In her short video Beatrice advocates for a ministry for older people in her country and a UN Convention on Rights of Older People. The Board members of Power of Touch were so moved by Beatrice's video that they decided to petition the government of Zimbabwe. Beatrice was able to have a tete-à-tete meeting with the President of Zimbabwe to discuss her call to action for older people.

Power of Touch successfully secured accreditation to the UN Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing in 2022 and are now well positioned to engage actively in this international process and further influence the government on strengthening the

human rights of older people.

Beatrice said that these national advocacy advances were directly due to her joining the global Pass It On Network and to the global Age With Rights campaign. Beatrice's voice also strengthened the global call to governments to start drafting a UN convention on the rights of older people now.

[Watch Beatrice's video on GAROP's YouTube channel.](#)

UN OEWG process

The 12th session was held in a hybrid format for the first time, which presented a new and unique set of challenges for us to respond to. Member States engagement in the 12th OEWG session was better than the 11th session in 2021, particularly in the substantive discussions. The concrete proposal from Argentina to establish a cross-regional core group to work on a draft decision to present to the 13th OEWG session was supported by over 30 Member States. This decision will seek to create an intersessional working group to work on substantive issues beyond the 13th session.

Civil society participation was strong once again at the 12th session and our positions aligned well to those of National Human Rights Institutions. The week before the session, GAROP organised an online preparatory meeting for any accredited NGOs and NHRIs in partnership with the NGO Committees on Ageing in New York and Geneva and with support from INPEA. We also organised a mid-session meeting that enabled NGOs and NHRIs to reflect together on how the session was going and prepare for the final Way Forward discussion where we mobilised in support of Argentina's proposal.

Civil society participation

Broader civil society engagement in the OEWG process in numbers:

- There were 27 written submissions from accredited NGOs on the two substantive focus areas, of which 22 were GAROP members.
- There were 22 written submissions from accredited NGOs on the two normative focus areas, of which 17 were GAROP members.
- Member States approved 22 new NGO accreditations at the 12th OEWG session, of which 15 were GAROP members.

In a survey prior to the session our members raised the following challenges with making written submissions to the OEWG this year:

- Lack of resources and capacity, including due to COVID and English language
- Need for simpler, clearer guidance and framing of questions from UN

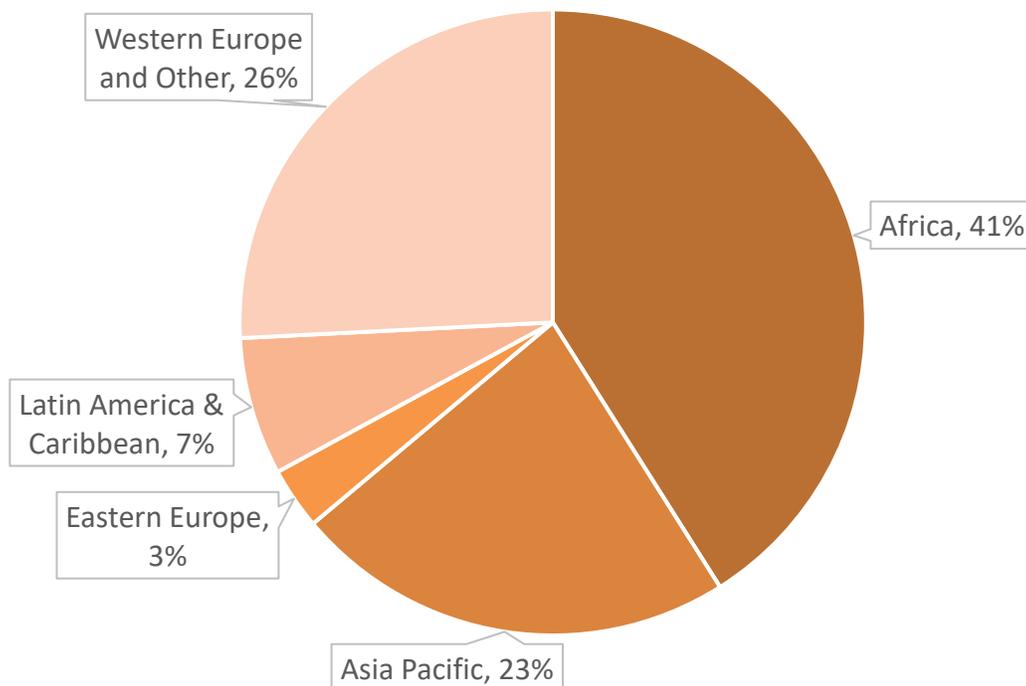
- Late call for submissions in parallel with other consultation processes
- Time constraints are challenging
- Focus areas are beyond organisation’s remit and expertise
- Sense of fatigue and futility around the process

GAROP Membership

Growth and contribution

We welcomed 20 new members between April 2021 and April 2022 taking us to a total of 406 member organisations. Membership is still open only to non-governmental, non-profit organisations who share our mission, vision and values.

Regional distribution of GAROP members (July 2022)



It is important that we share responsibility for our core costs across our network to strengthen our Secretariat and reduce reliance on the generosity of only a small number of members. We introduced the GAROP membership fee in 2021 and are heartened to see that some small member organisations in low- and middle-income countries chose to make optional fee payments as a demonstration of their commitment to our common goal.

In addition to the membership fee, members contribute to our collective advocacy and joint efforts as an Alliance in many ways. This includes:

- Sharing valuable knowledge and lived experience in our events and campaigns, such as our Global Rally Summit event and Age With Rights video statements.
- Providing useful insights and shaping our plans, tactics and messages, for example in the National Advocacy Workgroup.
- Sharing important national intelligence and updates to help refine our global and collective advocacy plans.
- Making in-kind and voluntary contributions to our collective work, such as offering translation and interpretation support and hosting our events on Zoom.
- Amplifying our collective voice and messages, for example through social media, voicing support for our joint statements, signing up to our Open Letters.
- Organising campaign activities and events, for example as part of the Global Rally.
- Introducing us to new partners and donors willing to support our work.

Supporting our members

Throughout 2021 we continued to support our members with information, guidance, resources and opportunities relating to advocacy on older people's human rights and a UN convention. This included:

- Facilitating the National Advocacy Workgroup for members keen to exchange information, updates and strategies for national level advocacy. The group currently has 85 members and met seven times between April 2021 and April 2022. Recordings of this Workgroup's meetings and other materials are available to all members in the website login space on our website.
- Providing regular updates to members via email, website and Twitter about NGO accreditation for the OEWG process and opportunities for NGOs to make written submissions to the OEWG process, the Independent Expert's work and other relevant opportunities
- Maintaining our online calendar profiling members events relating to older people's rights and a UN convention
- Distributing IFA bursaries for participation in the Global Conference on Ageing 2021 and facilitating technical and content support for participating members.
- Organising preparatory and planning meetings ahead of, during and after the UN OEWG session. This included organising two member consultation meetings in May 2021 with support from Steering Group members. The meetings considered the outcomes of the 11th OEWG session and shaped our campaign plan up to the 12th session. Summary reports available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)
- Coordinating a [briefing](#) about the Human Rights Council resolution in September 2021, including the context, its significance in the context of our work and advocacy messages and actions that members can take at national level to support the implementation of the Resolution's recommendations

Work of the Steering Group

The GAROP Steering Group sent letters to four key UN stakeholders following the 11th OEWG session in May to thank them for their contributions to the OEWG and to ask for their support with the proposed intersessional group to move forward with drafting between OEWG sessions. These included the UN Secretary General, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Chair of the OEWG, and the President of the General Assembly. The Steering Group also issued a short statement online on UN International Day of Older Persons 2021.

The Steering Group's Engagement Subgroup coordinated GAROP's external representation. It adopted new guidelines and a request form to guide GAROP's endorsement of events or initiatives and the use of our logo. With this new process GAROP endorsed events organised by members in Argentina, Canada, UK, and India.

A Terms of Reference is prepared for any Steering Group member or member who represents GAROP formally at external events. Between April 2021 and April 2022, Steering Group members officially represented GAROP externally at the following events:

- ASEM Forum on the Human Rights of Older Persons Present and Future – Civil Society Talk Concert, organised by the ASEM Global Ageing Centre in South Korea in October 2021
- IFA Global Conference on Ageing 'Rights Matter' – November 2021
- 'Gender Sensitisation and Protection of the Rights of Children and Vulnerable Adults' organised by the Sophia Centre for Women's Studies and Development in India in January 2022

The Steering Group's Funding Subgroup supported the implementation of the new membership fee and the development of several funding proposals through 2021, one of which resulted in funding through the Soroptimist International.

Reminder! The guidelines, request form, letters and Terms of Reference referred to above are all available along with the minutes of Steering Group meetings and other internal documents in the members login space on our website. If you receive emails from our Secretariat directly (via Mailchimp), then you can login to our website using your email address as your username (click 'lost password' if you cannot find or remember your password).

Secretariat

We have one full-time Coordinator in our Secretariat managing and delivering our work across all the areas detailed above. Our Secretariat also benefited from the support of two interns between April 2021 and April 2022 from the University of Queensland, Australia and Carleton University, Canada. During this period, the Secretariat also

received support from two volunteers from ILC Canada, which is ongoing. We are grateful to all of these colleagues for their dedication and the high quality of their work and to our Steering Group members who brokered this support.

Funding

The introduction of the GAROP membership fee in 2021 was an important step forward in terms of making our funding base more sustainable and distributing the costs of our work more evenly across the network. This reduces the risk of relying on a smaller number of members paying larger contributions. The Steering Group will continue to monitor and review the implementation of our membership fee and support the Secretariat to actively pursue external funding opportunities.

Summary of GAROP income and expenditure from April 2021-March 2022 (all USD¹)

GAROP Membership (fees and larger contributions)	
Income	64,081
Expenditure	
Secretariat function (Coordinator, IT running costs and technical support)	58,170
Carried forward	5,911
Sponsorship for Age With Rights campaign – Soroptimist International	
Income	27,337
Expenditure	
Communications costs (external consultants and interpretation services)	13,924
Carried forward	13,413
Total carried forward	19,324

The Soroptimist International funding has provided a much-needed boost to the reach and impact of our campaign. To build on this recent successful partnership, the GAROP Steering Group and Secretariat are actively pursuing further funding opportunities this year with a focus particularly on the strengthening of the Age With Rights campaign, including growing the global Secretariat team to coordinate activities and channelling grants to members to support campaign efforts.

Future plans

From April 2022 to April 2023 the GAROP Steering Group has the following broad goals:

- Work on the development and updating of our global strategy and related action plans in consultation with our members.

¹ Currency exchange rates at 17 August 2022
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- Increase cross-collaboration opportunities for members and strengthen our understanding of members' national advocacy experiences to improve support.
 - Provide additional advocacy tools and support through the Age With Rights campaign.
 - Continual review of GAROP's financial sustainability and active resource development.
 - Complete a Membership Review to advise on more detailed criteria and possible categorisation of the GAROP membership, including introducing conditions for payment of the membership fee.
 - Produce further guidelines to bring coherence and consistency to how we respond to member requests for letters of recommendation or support.
 - Assess options for long-term sustainability, including the possibility of GAROP becoming a legal entity.
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