



REPORT
LAUNCH

Advancing human rights, equity, and age-friendly futures

COSCO BC 75th Anniversary Conference Report

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Land acknowledgement & recognizing knowledge

The conference was held on the unceded and ancestral territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh peoples.

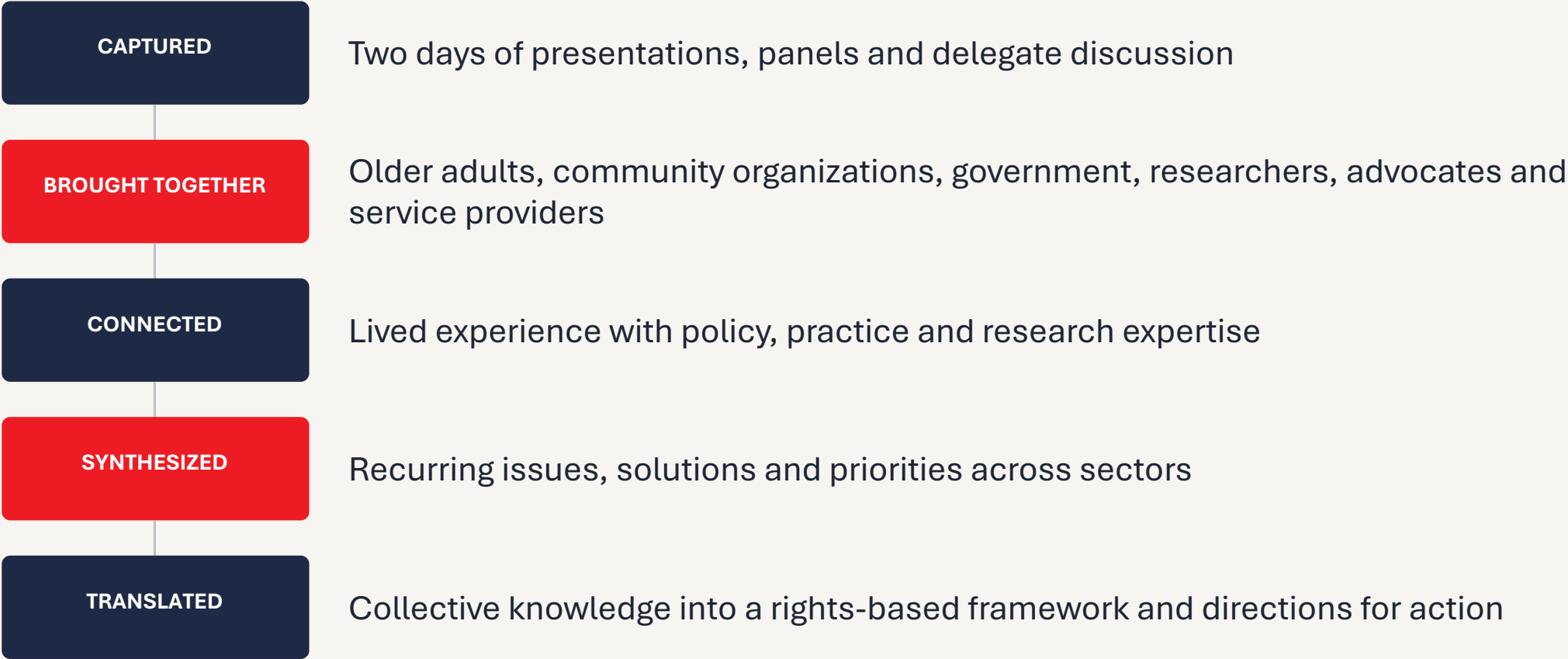
We recognize Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers and communities whose leadership continues to inform pathways toward equity, justice and self-determination.



Older adults are knowledge holders, rights holders and partners in shaping change.

From conference conversations to a policy agenda

How the report was developed



Not a transcript — a synthesis of what people told us mattered most.

Five messages came through clearly

01

Ageism is structural

It shapes policy, healthcare, housing, employment and whose voices are heard.

02

Inequality shapes aging

Income, gender, geography, disability, language and housing affect experiences of ageing.

03

Where you live matters

Rural and remote communities face major inequities in healthcare, transportation and services.

04

Community infrastructure matters

Seniors' centres, home and community care, transportation and local organizations are essential infrastructure.

05

Older adults must have power

"Nothing about us without us" must extend from consultation to participation, co-design and accountability.

Some findings we cannot ignore

15.5%

senior poverty in BC

1 in 3

seniors living alone
experiencing poverty

90%

older adults wanting to
age at home

7,200+

people on the LTC
waitlist

~300

days reported for LTC
placement

These are not isolated problems.

They reflect interconnected gaps in income security, housing, care, mobility and access.

From conference report to action

Where do we go from here?

- Advance a comprehensive BC seniors strategy grounded in human rights
- Move toward universal home support as a core public service
- Expand deeply affordable, non-market housing geared to income
- Treat seniors' centres and community-based services as essential social infrastructure
- Embed meaningful older-adult participation in policy development and implementation
- Address rural and remote inequities in healthcare and transportation
- Build accessible, age-friendly communities through housing, mobility and municipal planning
- Set measurable goals, timelines and public accountability mechanisms

Many solutions already exist — the challenge is moving from pockets of good practice to sustained, equitable systems.



75 years of advocacy — and the work ahead

- Use the report as a living policy and advocacy resource
- Build coalitions around shared priorities
- Bring recommendations to municipal, provincial and federal decision-makers
- Track progress and hold governments accountable
- Continue gathering evidence from older adults across BC

A rights-based future for aging must be built with older adults, not for them.

Building on this work at SFU

At SFU Gerontology, we are working alongside communities to advance many of these priorities.

Connect!Age

Social connection, resilience and inclusion among older adults, including those at greater risk of isolation.

Seniors’ centres in transition

Mapping how seniors’ centres and senior-serving organizations are adapting roles, partnerships, governance and services.

AGE-ECOS

A new grant application examining seniors’ centres as age-friendly community ecosystems connecting participation, health, services and ageing in place.

Wildfire & climate resilience

UK–Canada work with rural, remote and Indigenous communities, including intergenerational and community-based approaches to supporting older people.

**AgeTech Discovery Day —
Oct. 1**

Bringing older adults, researchers, community organizations and technology innovators together at SFU to shape innovation from the outset.

Research with communities — not simply about them.



**The question is not simply
how we care for an aging population.**

It is how we build a British Columbia in which people can continue to participate, contribute, exercise their rights and live with dignity throughout the life course.

Thank you

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