

The National Council For The Elderly, Seychelles.

United Nations General assembly OEWG for the purpose of strengthening the protection of the human rights of older person's eleventh working group.

Guiding questions for defining the normative content of the issues examined at the tenth Working Session of the Open-ended Working Group: Social protection and social security (including social protection floors).

Definition

What is the definition of the right to social security and social protection (including social protection floors) for older persons in the national legislation in your country? Or how should such a right be defined, considering existing national, regional and international legal framework?

Answer: In the Seychelles provisions are in place that recognise and safeguard the older Seychellois people.

Social security Act

A universal system whereby upon reaching 63 years of age all citizen of Seychelles who has resided in the country for at least 5 years immediately before the date of retirement must receive a pension which is adjusted according to inflation rate. The pension currently stands at RS5050; the same as the minimum wage.

Social Security Fund under the Social Security Act, 2010 is governed by the Social Security Fund Board.

Seychelles Pension Scheme Act

This benefit covers all full time and part time employees in the public, private and self employed persons. Payment begins at age 60 but no later than 63 years. The insured must have at least 10 continuous years of contributions to the social security fund or the Seychelles Pension Fund immediately before retirement or a total of 20 years of contribuon to the social security fund. This pension is also payable abroad. The Act was amended in 2017 to increase member's voluntary contribution.

Scope of the right

What are the key normative elements of the right to social protection and social security for older persons? Please provide references to existing standards on such elements as below, as well as any additional elements:

Answer: Seychelles Pension Fund under the Seychelles Pension Fund Act, 2005 is Governed by the Pension Board of Trustees. A mandatory 3% employee and 3% employer contribution, current. Additional voluntary contribution is an option. A plan to increase the mandatory contribution of both employee and employer to 10.5% by 2035 with a 1% increase every 5 years is in force. The pension can be accessed from the age of 60 years.

In place (currently being revised) The National Policy on Ageing, 2016 at Item 3.6: Social Protection System works parallel with the various Acts in force towards guaranteeing universal coverage for this access.

The Seychellois Charter of Fundamental Human Rights and Freedom of the Constitution (1993) recognises in a number of articles, most notably Article 36, the right of the aged to special protection and has undertaken to make reasonable provisions to ensure the quality of life for the elderly.

The civil Code of Seychelles, as a subsidiary law to the Constitution, also establishes several rules which protect the family; specifying that “the children shall be bound to maintain their father or mother or other descendants”.

The National Council of The Elderly Act, 2018 is one of the latest enactment towards furthering this safeguard.

All citizens residing in Seychelles over the age of 63 years can access Social Security fund. All contributors to the Pension Fund can access their pension from the age of 60 years.

Means testing identified potential at-risk Elderlies in the community by the Agency For Social Protection with various provisions available such as assisting with a Social Housing Scheme for this age group.

Public transport scheme available where pensioners travel free of charge.

State obligations

What are the measures that should be undertaken by the State to respect, protect and fulfill the right of social security and social protection for older persons, regarding the normative elements as provided above?

The Social Security Act, 2010 and the Pension Fund Act, 2005 make provision for the older Seychellois people to have access to adequate funds for a dignified life style.

The National policy on Ageing, 2016 at Item 3:11 a tool that guides provision of care.

The Public Health Service including hospitalised treatment and all medications is free of charge for all Seychelles citizens.

The enactment of the Council of Elderly Act, 2018 and a board for stewardship overseas this safeguarding.

Provision of home care services by Nurse Carers has enabled the elderly to remain in their homes in instances where assistance were required to remain independent, all funded by the Government.

A total of 9 elderly homes with construction starting in 1988 is another government commitment to ensure Elderlies at risk have a dignified lifestyle.

Special considerations

4. What special measures and specific considerations should be considered in developing the normative content of the right of older persons to social protection and social security?

Answer: Every year, the Social Security benefits for the elderly are reviewed and adjusted in line with the cost of living in the country.

A "Help Line" have been developed by the National Council For The Elderly for access, both as a resource point and for reporting/managing elderly abuse cases.

The elderly or their representative if not satisfied with outcomes of interactions have avenues of getting redress under both the Social Security Act, 2010 and the Pension Fund Act, 2005.

5. How should the responsibilities of non-State parties such as private sector be defined in the context of the right of older persons to social protection and social security?

Answer: The Senior Citizens Association have an active role and participates fully in decision making involving their age groups.

Government agencies do "road shows" to get the elderly group's input for changes impacting them.

The National Elderly Council through various activities and projects this year have increased further participation of NGOs interaction with older persons in the communities.

Implementation

What are the best practices and main challenges faced by your country in the adoption and implementation of the normative framework on social security and social protection for older persons?

Answer: The best practice being that there is a 100% coverage rate for all of the older persons by the existing Social Security System and older persons who have been in paid employment benefit twofold; receiving also benefits from the Pension Scheme.

Looking into the future and ensuring sustainability in Aged care for the country, the Government has recently opened up the industry to the private sector in 2019 with high level incentives offered by the government for those businesses wishing to participate. On the table is also discussion on increasing the age of retirement for the future.

