

14th session of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing Guiding questions for the focus area on “accessibility, infrastructure and habitat (transport, housing and access)”

1. What are the national legal provisions and policy frameworks that recognise older persons’ rights to accessibility, infrastructure and habitat (transport, housing and access)?

According to Article 83 of the Egyptian Constitution 2014,” The State shall guarantee health, economic, social, cultural and entertainment rights of the elderly, provide them with appropriate pensions to ensure them a decent standard of living and empower them to participate in public life. The State shall take into account the needs of the elderly while planning public utilities. It also encourages civil society organizations to participate in caring for the elderly”.

In February 2024, the Egyptian parliament approved a draft law submitted by the government to protect the rights of the elderly. The bill is meant to outline an integrated legislative system that gives elderly people several rights and advantages in all areas of life. Given a final approval, the bill comes in line with a constitutional commitment stated in Article 83 that guarantees the rights of the elderly are observed.

According to the law, the competent ministry, in coordination with the concerned authorities, issues an elderly card to facilitate their access to the services they are entitled to under this law and other laws, and this card is renewed every five years.

Additionally, the Egyptian National Human Rights Strategy includes some target results that should be achieved to protect and prompt the rights of the elderly such as increasing financial allocations to government social care facilities and inspection thereof.

Article 78 of the Egyptian constitution states that “The State guarantees citizens the right to decent, safe and healthy housing, in a way that preserves human dignity and achieves social justice”.

The Ministry of Social Solidarity is the responsible entity for providing social care and protection for different age groups according to their needs. There are almost 168 elderly homes (social care centres) administrated by the Ministry of

Social Solidarity in 22 governorates and serve around 4700 beneficiaries. Elderly homes are equipped to accommodate the elderly and provide them with a decent life as well as provide appropriate health and psychological care, cultural and social activities and entertainment programs.

Care homes were established for the elderly, together with the opening of adult daycare clubs in collaboration with non-governmental organisations. In addition to this, there is a national program called “The Homeless Elderly” to protect the homeless elderly, that provides care services, shelter, hot meals, health checkups, and reunions with families. Since the launch of the program in 2019, almost 5000 homeless elderly received care and protection services.

Private property is protected according to Article 35 of the Egyptian constitution. The right to inherit property is guaranteed. Private property may not be sequestered except in cases specified by law, and by a court order. Ownership of property may not be confiscated except for the public good and with just compensation that is paid in advance as per the law.

In 2020, the Egyptian Cabinet issued a regulation waiving public transportation fees to the elderly in all governorates. The elderly over the age of 70 are exempted from public transportation expenses, including subway, and trains. In addition to waiving 50% of the cost to those over 65 years old.

Elderly Care homes were established together with the opening of adult day care clubs, in collaboration with non-governmental organisations. There are online cultural activities in the elderly centres to empower them to be self-dependent in acquiring culture, that considered a great achievement.

The General Authority for Adult Education provided the elderly access to continuing education at the preparatory, secondary and university levels. Continuing education is a vital program for the elderly. Besides training programs on business, digital and technological skills to enable them to cope with recent changes.

2. What are the challenges and barriers faced by older persons for the realization of their right to accessibility, infrastructure use and habitat?

- Procedures related to legal protection to services provided to the elderly are complicated.

- Some kinds of disabilities need special care and extra resources. Being an older person and handicapped is a real challenge in some areas of the country.
 - Not all means of transportation are for older persons or even disabled persons friendly.
 - Housing codes are a must to set minimum standards for housing conditions to protect the lives of older persons.
3. What data, statistics and research are available at the national level regarding older persons' rights to accessibility, infrastructure and habitat (public transport, housing and access)?

According to the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) data, the number of elderly people in Egypt (60 years and over) reached about 9 million, representing 8.6% of the total population in 2023.

The number of employed elderly people reached about 1.2 million, representing 13.4% of the total elderly, according to data from the Labor Force Survey 2022, indicating that about 48.7% of employed elderly people work in the field of agriculture and fishing, while 18.6% work in trade activity.

The number of elderly care centres reached about 168 in 2022 across Egypt, and the number of their beneficiaries was 4,719, and the number of clubs for the elderly reached 191, while the number of their beneficiaries reached 56,000. The Ministry of Social Solidarity provides a pension to families headed by the elderly, (361.8 thousand families), and the value of the pension for these families is about 1.5 billion Egyptian pounds.

4. What measures are being taken to eliminate ageism, ageist stereotypes, prejudices and behaviours that hinder older persons' rights to accessibility, infrastructure and habitat?
- Non-governmental campaigns to raise awareness of the rights of older persons as well as the application of laws and regulations related to the rights of older persons. – Producing short clips on the rights of the elderly and sharing them on social media, governmental agencies and schools.
5. What mechanisms are necessary, or already in place, for older persons to submit complaints and seek redress for denial of their rights to accessibility, infrastructure and habitat (transport, housing and access)?

The Egyptian Cabinet unified governmental complaints system, as well as the National Council for Human Rights complaints system.

Establishing and activating “The Elderly Care Fund” with sustainable resources will contribute to promoting, developing and protecting the rights of the elderly, consolidating the values of equality and equal opportunities, and providing support to them in all social, economic, health, psychological and educational aspects.