



National Commission for Human Rights

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SUBMISSIONS OF THE NCHR OF RWANDA FOR THE 13TH SESSION OF THE UN OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON AGEING

Focus area : Right to health and access to health services

National legal and policy framework

1. What are the legal provisions and policy frameworks in your country that guarantee the right of older persons?

A. Laws that guarantee the right of older persons

- The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda guarantees for older persons the right to physical and mental integrity and the right to good health;
- The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons which guarantees the promotion and the protection of the rights of older persons has been ratified by Rwanda;
- Law governing the organisation of community-based health insurance scheme

B. POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

- The National Older Persons Policy adopted in May 2021 which reinforces the Government of Rwanda's commitment to promote the value and participation of older Persons in communities;
- National Policy for Family Promotion;
- Social Protection Policy and its related sector strategic plan;
- Social Security Policy and Strategy.

2. What steps have been taken to ensure that every older person has access to affordable and good quality health care and services in older age without discrimination?

Rwanda adopted a health development strategy based on decentralized management and district-level care. Currently, they are over 58,445 community health workers, 1245 health posts, 513 health centers and 56 public hospitals. Over 90% of disease burden are treated by Community

health workers, Health posts and health centers.

3. What data and research are available regarding older persons' right to health and access to healthcare and services?.

The current digital tool capturing health data does not display per age. However, different surveys, reports and studies conducted have data per age groups.

- a) On hepatitis C: out of a total of 326,263 individuals screened for HCVA b 33,076 (10.4%) aged 65 years old and above had positive HCVA b positive¹;
- b) On HIV out of a total of 214,074 people on Antiretroviral drugs, 11686 of them were aged 65+.²

4. Training for legislators, policymakers, health and care personnel on the right to health of older persons?

- Training for various categories of persons on different human rights including the rights of older people.

5. What steps have been taken to align macroeconomic policies and measures with international human rights law, to use maximum available resources for the realization of older persons' right to health, such as through expanding fiscal space, adopting targeted measures and international cooperation?

The National Older Persons Policy builds on Government's commitment to empower, support and promote the inclusion of older Persons in all aspect of Rwandan society and is aligned with international and regional legal instrument.

Equality and non-discrimination

6. Challenges faced by older persons in their enjoyment of the right to health,?

- Community health insurance is not covering yet highly specialized services such as cancer medications, assisted devices due to financial capacity of the fund.

7. What measures have been taken to eliminate ageism and discrimination based on age?

- The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda protects older persons against discrimination;

¹ A study conducted by Makuza, J.D., Liu, C.Y., Ntihabose, C.K. et al. in 2019, entitled Risk factors for viral hepatitis C infection in Rwanda: results from a nation wide screening program,

² RBC annual report (July 2022),

- The Law determining offences and penalties in general considers the discrimination as a crime and provides sentence in its article 163.
- The National Older Persons Policy

8. What measures have been taken to ensure that older persons are able to exercise their legal capacity on an equal basis with others?

- Radio;
- Community assemblies;
- Care givers such as community health workers.

Accountability

9. What judicial and non-judicial mechanisms are in place for older persons to complain and seek redress for the denial of their right to health?

- Older persons receive legal aid and assistance in resolving cases when they are indigent.
- Citizen complains redress desk in Districts and MINALOC and text message can be sent by mobile phone.
- Rwanda National Commission for Human Rights receives complaints, conducts investigations and seeks redress.

10. What mechanisms are in place to ensure the effective and meaningful participation of older persons living in different geographic areas of the country in the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of health laws, policies, programmes and services that affect them?

Community forums and community work where older persons share their knowledge and skills with young generation.
