



The National Council for Human Rights

Identification of possible gaps in the protection of the human rights of older persons and how best to address them

QUESTIONNAIRE

The Questions: Identification of gaps

1. possible gaps The National Council for Human Rights-NCHR has identified in the normative framework and practical implementation for the protection of the human rights of older persons.

a) Equality and non-discrimination

Rights of older persons and aging is not clearly mentioned as a cause for discrimination in the basic UN human rights instruments. Therefore, aging is not as commonly recognized as a cause for discrimination, and old persons often suffer to get their equal rights due to unawareness. In today's world the number of older persons is increasing, most of countries have to protect the rights of older persons as well as guarantee their full enjoyment of rights with no discrimination. Specially, older person themselves need to get awareness of their rights and should know possible means that facilitate getting their rights with no discrimination. The Egyptian Constitution guarantees the rights of the elderly, and Article 83 stipulates the state's obligation to guarantee the rights of the elderly in terms of health, economics, social, cultural, and recreational levels. The legal framework is a must to protect human rights of older persons, and the awareness and application of laws and legal would facilitate the protection of older persons equally with no discrimination.

b) Violence, neglect and abuse

Older persons are considered in some countries as a vulnerable group. Sometimes, they could not protect themselves from acts of violence against them. Therefore, States parties should investigate, prosecute, and punish all acts of violence against older persons, and special measures should be taken to guarantee their protection of violence, neglect and abuse.

c) Long-term care and palliative care

In some countries there is a special ministry that deal with older person's affairs, for example in Egypt, Ministry of Social Solidarity is the main responsible governmental body, that set regulations and administrate older persons care houses in coordination with Non-Governmental Organizations. The guarantee of sustainable qualified human resources and financial fund is a must for long-term care and palliative care.



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f) Education, training, lifelong learning and capacity-building g) Right to Work and Access to the Labour Market

According to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the right to education is protected. While the Covenant states that higher education should be made equally accessible for all, it does not include specific provisions on older persons. In most countries training and capacity-building is often focused on the needs of those still actively working and mainly for youth. Learning new skills enables older persons to participate in societal matters. In many developing countries, training older persons on digital and technological skills is not taking into consideration, that make them unable to keep up and cope with the new developments.

i) Contribution of Older Persons to Sustainable Development

The main slogan of the SDGs is “no one left behind” despite that Older persons are not specifically taken into consideration regarding contribution to sustainable development, and also their private contribution to sustainable development usually is not considered. Many countries are mainly depending on the exerted efforts of youth and they do count the formal participation and neglect of older persons’ contribution to sustainable development in rural and remote areas.

n) Participation in the public life and in decision-making processes

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, stated the right to participate in public life is a main right for anyone with no discrimination. The challenges in participation in public life and decision-making for older persons is critical, they lack the suitable means to participate in most developing countries, their voice is not heard. The tight economic situation make older persons just seeks for having sufficient income and health care. The participation of older persons in the decision making process will enable them to express their needs and challenges, therefore, engaging and participation of older persons in public life and decision-making process is an urgent matter for many countries.



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Options on how best to address the gaps

- 1. Please state how your Government/organization has engaged with international and regional human rights mechanisms (for example: universal periodic review (UPR) treaty bodies, special procedures, regional mechanisms), specifically with regard to older persons. (500 words)**

The National Council for Human Rights in Egypt collaborates with international, regional organizations to protect rights of older persons. NCHR conducts common activities with non-governmental organizations raise awareness of human rights including older persons. NCHR regularly submits reports on human rights situation to treaty bodies and UPR mechanism, special procedures, and regional mechanisms and send responses to questionnaires if requested. NCHR also participates in treaty bodies and UPR sessions. NCHR reports includes recommendations to protect and promote human rights of everyone with no discrimination including rights of older persons. NCHR Reports outline human rights achievements, challenges, and commitments and recommendations.

With regard to the older persons, NCHR addresses issues such as participation in public life and decision making process, healthcare, social protection, economic empowerment, and inclusion in its reports.

- 2. Have those engagements resulted in positive impact in strengthening the protection of the human rights of older persons? Please elaborate. (500 words)**

NCHR holds many consultative meetings with government agencies and civil society organizations, to present the necessary recommendations to protect human rights in general, and the rights of the elderly in particular.

One of the successful results of these consultations and meetings with governmental agencies and NGOs was the issuance of the National Human Rights Strategy in 2021, which includes a special item for promoting the rights of the elderly. In February 2024, the Egyptian Parliament also approved a draft law to protect and enhance the rights of the elderly. Those positive steps support NCHR's efforts to implement recommendations related to human rights mechanisms, recommendations of the UPR, and recommendations issued by NCHR in its reports to protect and promote human rights equally with no discrimination. Consequently, all those engagements resulted in positive impact in strengthening the protection of the human rights of older persons in Egypt.



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3. What other options can be considered to strengthen the protection of older persons?
Please elaborate. (500 words)

A new UN convention for the protection and promotion of older persons and a follow-up mechanism is a demand to strengthen the protection of older persons. Supporting the role of NGOs and NHRIs working for older persons is a must, and should be sustainable. Besides, exchanging experiences of good practices among states.

4. If applicable, what is your assessment on the protection of the human rights of older persons according to regional and international instruments? (500 words)

The regional and international instruments is a must to protect human rights of older persons, but the most important is the implementation of the recommendations and the follow-up mechanism of such instruments. Therefore, we should strengthen the mechanism of following- up the implementation and application of those instruments to be able to achieve human rights goals and guarantee that “NO ONE LEFT BEHIND”.