

Normative contents of the issues : LIFELONG LEARNING, EDUCATION AND SKILLS BUILDING – Examined at Tenth Session of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing

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Definition

What are the definitions of the rights of older persons to education, training, life-long learning and capacity-building in the national legislation in your country? Or how should such a right be defined, considering existing national, regional and international legal framework?

India has no legislation safeguarding the right of older persons to education, training, life-long learning and capacity-building. However, India ensures constitutional rights promising equality to all citizens and enjoins the state to not discriminate between citizens and advocates affirmative actions for socially backward citizens. Older persons have the right to lifelong learning, education and skills-building on an equal basis with others and without discrimination, so they can live autonomous and independent lives, fulfil their aspirations, build their skills and capacities, develop their full human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and participate fully in society.

Scope of the right

Non-discrimination

1.1 Older persons have the right to acquire and utilize their knowledge and skills without discrimination and on an equal basis with others.

Availability

1.2 Older persons have the right to all forms of lifelong learning, education and skills-building, including but not limited to tertiary education, vocational training and retraining, digital and new technology-based education, adult education, self, informal, recreational and community-based education, lifelong learning programs, legal literacy, and skills training in literacy, numeracy and technological competencies.

Acceptability and adaptability

1.3 Older persons have the right to equal access to opportunities of lifelong learning, education and skills-building available to the general public and to learning opportunities adapted to their

specific needs, including duration of study and communication needs, skills, motivations, preferences and diverse identities.

Accessibility

1.4 Older persons have the right to affordable lifelong learning, education and skills-building opportunities.

1.5 Older persons have the right to lifelong learning, education and skills-building opportunities in settings that are accessible to them, including in their communities and in care and support settings.

1.6 Older persons have the right to information about lifelong learning, education and skills-building opportunities and how to access them.

Participation

1.7 Older persons have the right to participate in the decision-making processes regarding the shape and content of lifelong learning, educational and skills-building programs aimed at older adults.

1.8 Older persons have the right to participate as teachers and sources of knowledge in lifelong learning, educational and skills-building programs for all generations.

State obligations

2. States Parties shall take effective and appropriate measures to ensure

Non-discrimination

2.1 Older persons have equal access to opportunities for all forms lifelong learning, skills-building and levels of education without discrimination based on age or any other grounds.

2.2 Older persons have the same opportunities as others to benefit from scholarships and other educational or study grants.

2.3 Systems and mechanisms are put in place so that all older persons are able to upgrade their acquired knowledge and skills and utilise them for the benefit of all.

2.4 Reasonable accommodation of an individual's requirements is provided.

2.5 The elimination of negative ageist stereotypes and prejudices about older persons' ability and willingness to learn, and the value and importance of learning, education and skills building in older age.

Availability

2.6 All forms of lifelong learning, education and skills-building are available to older persons, including but not limited to tertiary education, vocational training and retraining, digital and

new technology-based education, adult education, self, informal, recreational and community-based education, lifelong learning programs, legal literacy, and skills training in literacy, numeracy and technological competencies.

Acceptability and Adaptability

2.7 Older persons have access to lifelong learning, education and skills-building opportunities adapted to their specific needs, skills, motivations, preferences and diverse identities.

2.8 Sufficient funds are allocated for lifelong learning, education and skills-building opportunities for older persons.

Accessibility

2.9 Older persons have access to affordable lifelong learning, education and skills-building opportunities.

2.10 Older persons have access to lifelong learning, education and skills-building opportunities in the settings in which they choose to live, including in their communities and in care and support settings.

2.11 Older persons have access to information about lifelong learning, education and skills-building opportunities and how to access them.

Participation

2.12 Older persons have opportunities to participate in the decision-making processes regarding the shape and content of learning, educational and skills-building programs aimed at older adults.

Remedies and redress

2.13 Safeguards are put in place to protect against breaches of the right to lifelong learning, education and skills-building, including breaches of privacy and security of data on digital, online and new technology-based learning platforms.

Special considerations

4. What special measures and specific considerations should be considered in developing the normative content of the rights of older persons to education, training, life-long learning and capacity-building?

4.1 The capacity of varying nations based on economic ability to accord a meaningful right of older persons to education, training, life-long learning and capacity-building should be considered.

4.2 Affluent nations should be willing to support poorer nations

5. How should the responsibilities of non-State parties such as private sector be defined in the context of the rights of older persons to education, training, life-long learning and capacitybuilding?

5.1 There should be no discrimination on the part of non-state parties such as private sector in implementing the rights of older persons to education, training, life-long learning and capacitybuilding.

5.2 Where private sector faces difficulties it is the responsibility of the state to remove those obstacles.

5.3 It is the responsibility of the state to develop capacity among non-state actors to meet the needs of older persons.

Implementation

6. What are the best practices and main challenges faced by your country in the adoption and implementation of the normative framework on education, training, life-long learning and capacity-building for older persons?

6.1 India has rapidly expanded its higher education sector to the point that many educational institutions today are in a position to welcome elderly also into its rolls.

6.2 India has functional literacy missions in every state and at district and lower levels whose primary task is to help illiterate people, primarily adults and older persons, enter the world of letters. These could be hubs for further learning.

6.3 India has embarked on a Skill India mission which can be expanded to provide training for elderly persons.

6.4 India has the world's largest open university system and through Swayam the government is now entered massive open online courses that have the potential to reach several million older persons with smartphone and mobile penetration increasing.

6.5 Poverty remains a challenge in much of India. India's elderly in villages work in the agricultural sector and have few avenues to branch out into other areas of education and skilling.

6.6 In cities the young are rapidly phasing out older people in most jobs, skilled and unskilled. Jobs are also becoming hard to come by. A focus on education and lifelong learning can help elderly cope with these democratic transitions and changes happening in the world economy.