



**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)”**

National legal and policy framework

1. What are the national legal provisions and policy frameworks that recognize older persons’ rights to accessibility, infrastructure and habitat (transport, housing and access)? This could include, but is not limited to:

- a) the right of older persons to adequate housing, including land, property and inheritance.
- b) the right of older persons to access and enjoy, on an equal basis with others, the physical environment, transportation, information and communications (including ICTs), and other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas (e.g. buildings, roads, transportation and other indoor and outdoor facilities, schools, housing, green spaces, medical facilities and workplaces; information, communications and other services, including electronic services and emergency services).
- c) policies/programmes that enable older persons to live independently and to be included in their communities as they age.

Answer question 1 and the item A+ B+C: In terms of legislation, there are no explicit laws stipulating the provision of housing and transportation for seniors.

However, within policy frameworks, the majority of national strategies highlight the significance of ensuring suitable accommodation and transportation for seniors, along with providing them with appropriate parks and recreational facilities. One such example is the National Strategy for Senior Citizens 2018-2022, which extensively tackles the supportive physical environment for seniors, encompassing elements such as roads, housing, transportation, and daytime clubs.

The National Center for Human Rights (NCHR) has recurring demands for the establishment of senior-friendly housing complexes. However, these efforts have yet to materialize due to the high construction costs and the limited proportion of seniors able to afford them (targeted group).

Additionally, the Zakat Fund allocates annual funds through its programs to renovate and maintain the homes of underprivileged families in Jordan, particularly in pockets of poverty. Between (2019 – 2021), a total of 17 homes for seniors were renovated under this program.

Furthermore, several charitable organizations seek to collaborate with local and international organizations to maintain and renovate the homes of seniors.

Some entities have rehabilitated their buildings and facilities. For instance, the Greater Amman Municipality rehabilitated its social centers and public service offices, equipping them with wheelchairs, blood pressure monitors, and glucose meters. Additionally, various green infrastructure projects, funded by the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), have been carried out to rehabilitate public parks, establish walking and sports areas for seniors, and integrate these groups in all stages of the projects (design and planning), with their needs considered to rehabilitate the site appropriately to serve the elderly.

Moreover, the Greater Amman Municipality/King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein Parks Directorate has supported and actively engaged with seniors by forming a committee of seniors called "Friends of King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein Parks." This initiative integrates seniors into seminars and activities held in the parks and rehabilitates the infrastructure to meet their needs. Additionally, the municipality has rehabilitated (19) sites in Amman for seniors, offering services, activities, and recreational programs tailored to seniors. Presently, efforts are underway to collaborate with the Ministry of Social Development to encourage seniors to participate in these activities and programs, as these sites serve as alternatives to daytime clubs.

In 2022, an agreement was signed between the Supreme Judge Department and The Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (HCD) to renovate the main building of the Supreme Judge Department, Sharia Judicial Institute and (4) Sharia courts to meet the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities, which also serves the seniors.

Most transportation is privately owned and generally not adapted for the seniors or persons with disabilities, except for certain transportation projects managed by official institutions. For example, in Amman, the Greater Amman Municipality collaborated with the Amman Vision Transport Company to provide (135) buses equipped for use by the seniors and persons with disabilities, operating along (27) routes within Greater Amman Municipality. Additionally, (16882) exemption cards for the Amman Bus were issued for the seniors and persons with disabilities residing in Amman, allowing them to travel for free within (11) zones within Greater Amman Municipality.

The Greater Amman Municipality also launched the "Amman, a Senior-Friendly City" initiative, forming a committee with representatives from various institutions to work towards making Amman more senior-friendly.

2. What are the challenges and barriers faced by older persons for the realization of their right to accessibility, infrastructure use and habitat (transport, housing and access) at the national and international levels?

Answer:

- Senior individuals continue to face challenges in accessing personal banking facilities or housing loans due to their age. In September 2022, the National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA) contacted the Central Bank of Jordan to urge banks to streamline housing transactions for the seniors, exempting them from stringent regulations, and to adopt a fair approach in their dealings through Corporate Social Responsibility portfolio.
- The majority of public facilities, places of worship, and recreational areas remain inadequately equipped for seniors use, particularly in rural and desert regions. This hinders the mobility of the seniors and their access to these places. Additionally, many areas still lack public transportation services tailored to the seniors, making it challenging for them to travel and access services.
- Infrastructure such as traffic intersections, pedestrian crossings, and sidewalks is still not tailored for seniors use.

Data and research

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)?

Answer:

The evaluation report of the National Strategy for Senior Citizens 2018-2022, within the framework of the supportive physical environment, included the following data:

Number of public transport buses adapted for use by seniors (within the capital Amman only)	2017 12	2022 135
Number of licensed day clubs for seniors by the Ministry of Social Development	2017 Four clubs	2021 One club established by the voluntary sector
Number of Entertainment centers established by the Greater Amman Municipality for seniors	2017 -	2022 19
Number and amount of support provided by the Zakat Fund for renovating homes of seniors	2019 5	2021 3

Equality and non-discrimination

4. What measures are being taken to eliminate ageism, ageist stereotypes, prejudices and behaviours that hinder older persons' rights to accessibility, infrastructure and habitat (transport, housing and access)?

Remedies and Redress

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)

Answer questions 4+5:

The accomplishments and significance of seniors accessing these benefits, along with the endeavors of national institutions to facilitate them, were discussed in the initial question and its subsequent parts. This encompasses the recurring appeals from the NCHR to establish senior-friendly housing complexes. Nevertheless, these endeavors are still inactive due to the high construction costs and the limited proportion of seniors able to afford them (targeted group).

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Guiding questions for the focus area on participation in public life and in decision-making processes

National and local legal and policy framework

1. What are the national and local legal provisions and policy frameworks in your country that guarantee

- a) right to equality and prohibition of all forms of discrimination against older persons on the basis of age, alone or combined with other grounds, in the context of participation in public life and in decision-making processes;
- b) elimination of all forms of ageism and age discrimination from laws, frameworks, programs, policies, strategies and practices regarding participation in public life and in decision-making processes;

Answer question 1 and the item A+ B: Seniors in Jordan are actively involved in public life and decision-making processes, with many serving as consultants or experts in various fields both domestically and internationally. The Jordanian Senate, appointed by the King, includes experienced seniors of both genders who are consulted on national issues, and their recommendations are considered in Senate committees comprising experts from all sectors. Additionally, many senior males participate in activities of the Jordanian Tribal Senate.

The National Strategy for Senior Citizens 2018-2022 emphasizes seniors' participation in public life and decision-making, with various inputs and measures aimed at ensuring their right to participate in these areas.

- c) right to freedom of expression, including freedom to seek, receive and impart information;
- d) right of peaceful assembly; e) right to freedom of association;
- f) right to take part in the government of one's country, directly or through freely chosen representatives;

Answer C+D+F:

The Jordanian Constitution of 1952 and its amendments, the legal framework governing all aspects of the state, ensures that provisions applicable to all individuals in society also apply to seniors.

Article (7), in the second chapter concerning the rights of Jordanians stipulates:

1. Personal freedom is protected.
2. Any violation of public rights, freedoms, or the privacy of Jordanians is a crime punishable by law.

This reflects a clear acknowledgment of freedoms and rights for all members of society, including seniors.

g) active, free and meaningful participation of older persons and their representative organizations in all matters related to participation in public life and in decision-making processes;

h) access to prompt remedies and redress when older persons' above mentioned rights are violated.

Answer G +H:

Seniors have the right to run for and vote in the House of Representatives. However, their participation in the 2020 parliamentary elections was lower than the overall voter turnout for all groups. This can be attributed to their generally lower involvement in political life and some seniors' difficulties in accessing polling stations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the 2020 elections, the voter turnout among seniors aged (60 and above) was 27.2%. Female seniors accounted for 41.2% of this turnout, while males accounted for 58.8%.

2. What steps have been taken to ensure participation in public life and in decision-making processes without discrimination?

Help Age International/Jordan) organized various volunteer activities involving both male and female seniors to increase their engagement. These activities included:

Answer:

- Formation of community committees comprised of senior male and females between 2019 and 2021, with 9 members. Regular meetings are held with these committees to involve them in planning and executing various activities and initiatives. One notable achievement of these committees is leading a campaign to advocate for the health rights of seniors under the title "My Health, My Care, My Right."
- Establishment of an officially registered association with the Ministry of Social Development, stemming from a group of seniors. It was formed in collaboration with the Naya Network in the Zarqa Governorate.

Moreover, the Greater Amman Municipality organized handicraft training courses for senior females in 2018, 2019, 2021, and 2022, totaling (112) courses that benefited (590) participants. The municipality also conducted an entertainment visit program for seniors, with a total of (105) visits during the years 2018, 2019, and 2022.

Furthermore, numerous associations in various governorates, along with some local and international organizations, support social and economic activities involving seniors, particularly females.

Data and research

3. What data and research are available regarding older persons' participation in public life and in decision-making processes? Please indicate how national or sub-national data is disaggregated by sex, age and inequality dimensions, and what indicators are used to monitor older persons' participation in public life and in decision-making processes.

Answer:

- A group of seniors participate in key decision-making bodies in Jordan, including the council of ministers, the Senate, and the House of Representatives. The percentage of seniors in the council of ministers was 32% by August 2022, down from 52% in 2015. In the Senate, seniors make up 80% of the members, while in the House of Representatives, they account for only 20%.
- Seniors also participate in various subsidiary councils, such as the Higher Education Council, the Boards of Trustees of Official Universities, the High Health Council, the Jordan Medical Council, and the Jordan Nursing Council. These councils typically represented by the relevant minister in the council of ministers and are responsible for developing national policies and strategies within their areas of expertise and authority.
- In the 2020 parliamentary elections, the voter turnout among seniors aged (60 and above) was 27.2%. Female seniors represented 41.2% of the total senior voters, while males represented 58.8%.
- According to the Ministry of Labor and the Department of Statistics, the number of employed Jordanians aged (60 and above) was 37,967 by the end of 2021, making up 2.8% of the workforce. This is a decrease from 43,285 in 2017, when they constituted 3.0% of the workforce. This decline is expected to continue due to increasing youth unemployment, which reached 22.6% by the end of the second quarter of 2022.
- Data from the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research shows a decline in the number of senior academics and administrative staff in both government and private universities. The number of senior academics decreased from 2,839 in 2017 to

2,473 in 2021, while the number of senior administrative staff decreased from 1,119 in 2017 to 766 in 2021¹.

Equality and non-discrimination

4. What are the challenges and barriers that older persons face regarding participation in public life and in decision-making processes, including the impact of intersectional discrimination and inequality based on age, gender, disability, race, ethnicity, migratory status and other grounds?

Answer:

- There is currently no high-level advisory body to utilize the expertise of seniors.
- There is only one daytime club available.

Accountability

What judicial and non-judicial mechanisms are in place for older persons to complain and seek redress when their right to participate in public life and in decision-making processes is violated?

Answer:

Sure, there are legal mechanisms in place to protect seniors, covered by provisions in laws such as the Domestic Violence Protection Law, Personal Status Law, and Penal Code. As follows:

The Domestic Violence Protection Law No. 15 of 2017 serves as a national mechanism to reduce the incidence of violence against seniors. It enables designated employees to mediate settlements, relocate victims to safe places, and implement alternative measures for perpetrators of domestic violence.

¹ According to Jordanian Universities Law No. 18 of 2018 and its amendments, university faculty members are allowed to combine their salaries from their universities with their retirement pensions. It is also permissible to extend the service of a faculty member holding the rank of professor at the university until reaching the age of 75, provided that they are medically fit to perform their academic duties, as determined by the Dean's Council.

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Guiding questions on the normative content related to social inclusion

Definition

1. How are the key human rights related to older persons' social inclusion defined in the national and local legislation in your country? If definitions are not available, how should such rights be defined considering relevant existing national, regional and international legal frameworks?

The Jordanian Constitution of 2011 and its amendments, explicitly protects seniors. Where article (6/5) stipulates:

Answer:

"The law protects motherhood, childhood, old age, and cares for youth, persons with disabilities, and protects them from abuse and exploitation."

All national strategies related to seniors emphasize the importance of integrating them into national policies and giving them the priority they deserve.

One of these strategies is the National Strategy for Senior Citizens 2018-2022, which focuses on the importance of integrating seniors into society in all social, cultural, and economic aspects

Scope of the right

2. Please provide references to existing national legal standards relating to older persons social inclusion on normative elements such as:

a) the right of older persons to take part in cultural life;

b) older persons' inclusion in the digital sphere;

Answer question 2 item: A+ B:

In Jordan, efforts are made in these areas through community initiatives and initiatives of national institutions to implement cultural programs in which seniors participate. Additionally, there are programs that promote the concept of digital justice. An example of this is

the Greater Amman Municipality, which

annually organizes specialized programs for seniors to use the internet and computers.

Furthermore, the NCFA has implemented a national media campaign to promote the role of seniors in society and the importance of providing digital justice for this group.

c) ensuring that older persons can live independently and be included in the community;

d) ensuring the social inclusion of older persons living in institutions;

Answer C+D:

In Jordan, there are (9) senior housing facilities, some voluntary and some private, overseen by the Ministry of Social Development to protect seniors' rights and ensure their needs are met.

e) older persons' inclusion in intergenerational policies and programmes;

Answer:

This is achieved through the development of programs and awareness campaigns emphasizing the value of young people benefiting from seniors' experiences and skills in various areas such as education, social interactions, economics, and politics. Additionally, civil society organizations are encouraged to establish joint community programs that bring together young people and seniors for knowledge and experience exchange. There is also an emphasis on activating community service and volunteer programs within senior institutions and their residences.

State obligations.

3.What are the measures that should be undertaken by the State to respect, protect and fulfil relevant human rights to ensure the social inclusion of older persons?

Answer:

The Jordanian government has enacted specific legislation for seniors, the "**Elderly Care System No. (97) for the year 2021**" aimed at providing health, psychological, and social care services to seniors. This system includes the creation of a special account for funding these services, with an emphasis on encouraging non-affluent or donating relatives to provide care at home. The account was opened at the Ministry of Social Development on December 19, 2021, with its primary objectives including:

- Ensuring seniors receive appropriate social, health, physical, and psychological care at home or within their families in accordance with established guidelines.

- Enhancing the effectiveness of social services provided to seniors.
- Providing housing for seniors whose families are unable to care for them or for those without families to care for them.
- Integrating seniors into society.
- Supporting programs and projects tailored for seniors.

Special considerations

4. What special measures and specific considerations should be considered to respect, protect and fulfil relevant human rights to ensure the social inclusion of older persons?

Answer:

Seniors in Jordanian society are respected and esteemed, reflecting the values of divine religions and Arab traditions

Implementation

5. What are the best practices and main challenges faced by your country in the adoption and implementation of relevant human rights to ensure the social inclusion of older persons

Answer: Not available...

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Guiding questions on the normative content related to right to health and access to health

services Definition

1. How is the human right of older persons to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health defined in the national and local legislation in your country? If definitions are not available, how should such rights be defined considering relevant existing national, regional and international legal frameworks?

2. The human right to health encompasses both access to health care and attention to the material and other conditions which are necessary for its full enjoyment. What provisions have been made to ensure that older persons enjoy access, on an equal basis with others, to social protection, adequate water and sanitation, adequate housing and to health education?

Answer question 1 + 2:

All senior individuals in Jordan aged (60 and above) are entitled to free third-tier health insurance as per a 2006 decision by the Prime Ministry. Currently, the Ministry of Health is working on finalizing the draft for integrating seniors into the health benefits package program in collaboration with the Health Insurance Department. This program aims to specify the health benefits seniors are entitled to and the corresponding financial coverage.

Military retirees, on the other hand, benefit from comprehensive health insurance provided by the Royal Medical Services, which covers their treatment expenses as well as those of their dependents.

The Ministry of Health is the primary authority responsible for providing healthcare and overseeing the care of seniors in Jordan. Health centers under the Ministry of Health conduct regular medical check-ups for seniors.

Scope of the right

3. What are the key normative elements of the human right of older persons to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health?

Please provide references to existing standards on elements including but not limited to:

a) Prohibition of all forms of discrimination against older persons on the basis of age, alone or combined with other grounds, in all matters related to health.

b) Provision of promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative health facilities, goods and services, as well as health care and support, including on aspects such as quality of care, longterm and palliative care and support.

Answer question 3 item A+B:

ne of the key issues concerning seniors in Jordan revolves around their health, which poses various challenges including chronic diseases and disabilities. The Ministry of Health's strategy for the years 2018-2022 places significant emphasis on seniors as a priority group needing essential healthcare services, particularly in managing chronic illnesses, ensuring health insurance coverage, and providing therapeutic, preventive, and rehabilitative care for this demographic.

The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with several entities such as the Institute for Family Health (IFH) and the Greater Amman Municipality, focuses on addressing the health needs of seniors. They aim to provide them with therapeutic and preventive services to safeguard their physical, mental, and emotional well-being through the following:

- ✓ Providing seniors and their families with education about healthy nutrition patterns to prevent chronic diseases and their complications.
- ✓ Educating seniors and their families about the importance of participating in suitable physical exercise programs for seniors.
- ✓ Holding free medical days in all regions to conduct regular preventive medical examinations for seniors.
- ✓ Ensuring the availability of specialized medical personnel for geriatric diseases.
- ✓ Ensuring the availability of specialized nursing staff for the care and interaction with seniors.
- ✓ Providing necessary medical services for seniors with various types of disabilities.

c) Availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of health facilities, goods and services as well as health care and support, including aspects such as quality of care, long-term and palliative care and support.

d) Exercise of older persons' legal capacity on an equal basis with others, including the ability to make an informed consent, decisions and choices about their treatment and care.

Answer item C+D:

The Ministry of Health has expanded its efforts to establish senior-friendly health centers, increasing their number from (9) centers at the end of 2017 to (21) centers by the end of 2021. These centers are subject to various standards, including infrastructure readiness, availability of medical staff especially in family medicine, training and provision of at least five trainees from each comprehensive senior-friendly health center to deal with seniors, and providing an emergency room for urgent cases handled at the center before being referred to hospitals.

Additionally, the Ministry has a general policy to prioritize healthcare services at health centers and hospitals for seniors. Furthermore, the IFH (a voluntary sector) has established a senior-friendly clinic to provide primary healthcare services to seniors, offering them medical advice and raising awareness among them and their families through evidence-based publications.

State obligations

4. What are the measures that should be undertaken by the State to respect, protect and fulfil the human right of older persons to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, regarding the normative elements as provided above?

Special considerations

5. What special measures and specific considerations should be considered in developing the normative content on older persons' right to health?

Answer question 4+5:

Seniors are entitled to receive high-quality services, which is why they have been included in the health insurance network. Regarding senior care facilities, there is a need to provide healthcare services and assign doctors to monitor their conditions.

1. How should the responsibilities of non-State parties such as private sector be defined in the context of the human right to health of older persons?

Answer

Periodic medical check-ups for seniors are usually conducted at health centers affiliated with the Ministry of Health. Free medical days are rare, and are more likely to be organized by private or voluntary sectors on specific occasions such as World Senior Citizen Day, World Alzheimer's Day, World Cancer Day, and others.

The Ministry of Health is still unable to provide home healthcare services for seniors due to the high cost involved. Consequently, many private sector institutions offer these services under the Home Healthcare Services Licensing System of 2016, where they can provide home services with a license from the Ministry of Health.

Moreover, the IFH conducts home visits through its outreach program to provide awareness and basic medical services for cases unable to attend the institute's clinic for treatment.

Given the pressing need for home healthcare services provided by qualified professionals for seniors, the Vocational Training Corporation introduced a training program in 2019 called "Caregiver for the Elderly and Disabled." This program, which includes four training units, one of which focuses on providing healthcare services for seniors, has been approved by relevant authorities. The Vocational Training Corporation has trained many specialists, and these services are provided either personally by the specialist or through private sector care institutions.

Implementation

6. What are good or promising practices and main challenges faced by your country in the adoption and implementation of the normative framework on the human right to health of older persons?

Answer:

The guidelines within the Aged Care System of 2021 and its utilization instructions have outlined the criteria for accessing the account for both housing and home services. This applies to all senior individuals residing in Jordan, whether Jordanian nationals or foreigners, who are in need and lack a sponsoring entity or a source of income.

Furthermore, the instructions have specified the areas of expenditure from the account as follows: 1) allowances, equipment & medical devices; 2) home nursing services; 3) any programs or services for care decided by the spending committee for the benefit of senior citizens; 4) providing financial assistance to the indigent relatives of the seniors or those willing to care for them at home.