

14th session of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing

Social Inclusion

Social inclusion is recognised as being essential for older persons in Mauritius and the following key measures have been implemented to promote social inclusion of older persons in Mauritius:

- Setting up of Community centres and recreation centres: creating spaces for socialising and activities to combat isolation;
- Accessible public places: in order to ensure that public areas cater for the needs of older persons; and
- Social Security System: which provides for a non-contributory old age pension for people aged 60 and above, thereby offering financial security which reduces poverty and allows for participation in social activities.

The Senior Citizens Council has been set up by Act of Parliament to improve the well-being of Senior Citizens and promote activities and projects for their welfare with regard to their rights to dignity and independence. Its members are voluntary organisations catering for Senior Citizens and registered with the Registrar of Associations. There are presently 565 Senior Citizens Association in Mauritius and 67 in Rodrigues. It is administered by an Executive Committee comprising of a Chairperson, vice-Chairperson, 9 elected members representing each one of the 9 districts of Mauritius. It organises activities, leisure and educational/training for its members.

Moreover, they participate in cultural programmes organised by the Association and the Senior Citizens Council.

Older persons are also given the opportunity to pursue continuous learning and training through adult literacy and numeracy programs as well as training in acquiring basic skills in information and communication technology to allow them to fully participate in social and community life.

A number of measures have been implemented by the Government to ensure improved financial autonomy and promote social activities of older persons, one of the key measures being the drastic increase in all basic pensions over the past years.

The Protection of Elderly Persons Act makes provision for the creation of the Elderly Person's Protection Unit to, ensure, promote and sustain the physical, emotional, social, cultural and economic protection of elderly persons. It also receives complaints from elderly persons who are in need of protection or assistance and take such measures as may be necessary; apply to the Court for a protection order where it deems it necessary in circumstances where there is a real danger to, or threat on, the life of an elderly person.