

## Guiding Questions for the focus areas of the IX Session of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing: Long-term care and palliative care

- 1) In your country/region, how is long-term care for older persons defined and provided for in legal and policy frameworks? What types of support and services are covered?  
***Long term care for the elderly largely is provided by relatives and children of the terminally ill elderly persons in the country. Those that are not terminally ill are cared for by the military for those who once served there. Family support is greatly encouraged than institutional care for the elderly. Long term care for the elderly is not well explained in the National Policy for the older persons in Malawi.***
  
- 2) What are the specific challenges faced by older persons in accessing long-term care?  
***Most elderly persons face health challenges requiring frequent hospital visits. Most elderly persons suffer from either stroke, diabetes, poor vision, high blood pressure and mental illness. Another challenges are those of financial hardships due to retirement or unable to work because of old age. Such old persons depend largely depend on their children, relatives and well-wishers whose are always in short supply. Some older persons experience torture, abuse and exploitation by their children, relatives and community members. They also suffer from stigma, discrimination and violence which often lead into loss of life and those that are falsely accused of practicing witchcraft may be subjected to lack of assistance as many seem not ready to offer long term care to them.***
  
- 3) What measures have been taken/are necessary to ensure high-quality and sustainable long-term care systems for older persons, including for example:
  - Sufficient availability, accessibility and affordability of services on a non-discriminatory basis?  
***Government has mainstreamed non-discrimination against older persons in its policies***
  
  - High quality of services provided?  
***The government has established the section within the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare to be responsible for the management, caring and provision of high quality services to the older persons and for the promotion and protection of their rights as well as social welfare.***
  
  - Autonomy and free, prior and informed consent of older persons in relation to their long-term care and support?  
***The government with the formulation of the National Policy for the Older Persons provide respect for self-determination in all matter concerning the welfare of elderly population. Informed consent is spelt out as a condition to be followed in all matters affecting the older persons.***

- Progressive elimination of all restrictive practices (such as detention, seclusion, chemical and physical restraint) in long-term care?

***The Malawi National Policy for the older persons has been developed as a way of eliminating all forms of discrimination against the older persons in Malawi. However some sections such as detention, seclusion, chemical and physical restraint in long term care have not been clarified.***

- Sustainable financing of long-term care and support services?

***The administration of pension for those employees in government and other sector has been advocated and provided in the policy. The Department of Disability and Elderly affairs has been sensitizing older citizen to develop a serving culture and plan for their future after retirement. Some NGOs in Malawi have been providing goats to the elderly so that after sometime when they are many can sale and meet their needs.***

- Redress and remedy in case of abuse and violations?

***Malawi government has established Community Policing System to make sure that security and protection is provided first by the communities themselves. Security structures have been established and have been empowered to manage all forms of abuse against any person including the elderly persons in Malawi and report to police any serious violation of human rights for every person including older persons. The existence of Malawi Human Rights Commission and its specialised Directorate of Disability and Elderly Rights provides a framework for redress and facilitating access to remedy in case of abuse and human rights violations.***

- 4) What other rights are essential for the enjoyment of the right to long-term care by older persons, or affected by the non-enjoyment of this right?

***Right to access to proper medical care, right to life, dignity and non-discrimination, freedom from torture, inhumane or degrading treatment, right to safety nets.***

- 5) In your country/region, how is palliative care defined in legal and policy frameworks?

***Palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other problems, physical, psychological and spiritual.***

- 6) What are the specific needs and challenges facing older persons regarding end-of-life care? Are there studies, data and evidence available?

***Limited number of specialized personnel, lack of financial resources, lack of infrastructure (buildings, transportations, etc). Reports by Palliative Association of Malawi, University of Malawi, College and Medicine and Center for Social Research of Chancellor College***

- 7) To what extent is palliative care available to all older persons on a non-discriminatory basis?

***This is very limited with an exception of referral hospitals***

- 8) How is palliative care provided, in relation to long-term care as described above and other support services for older persons?

***This is mainly provided through health care services***

- 9) Are there good practices available in terms of long-term care and palliative care? What are lessons learned from human rights perspectives?

***Where a family or community saves as a primary care health care provided, it has proved to be a best practice. This approach provides for regular monitoring of the persons in questions and reduces congestion in hospitals. However, this is subject to availability of skilled personnel.***