

**FOCUS AREA OF THE 1X SESSION OF THE OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON AGEING  
LESOTHO'S SUBMISSION.**

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**AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE**

- 1. In your country/ region, how is the right to autonomy and independence of older persons defined in legal and policy frameworks?**

**ANSWER:** Autonomy is defined as to express a person's choices in all aspects of life including but not limited to decision making for their care and support, property, religious beliefs, cultural preferences and health and medical treatment, etc. The Lesotho Constitution of 1993 is general on issues of human rights. There are no specific provisions pertaining to autonomy of elderly people in the Constitution. However, the Lesotho Policy for Older persons 2014 specifically provides for the right to independence

- 2. What other rights are essential for the enjoyment of the right to autonomy and independence by older persons, or affected by the non-enjoyment of this right.**

**ANSWER:** These are the right to life, freedom from discrimination and right to equality before the law and the equal protection of the law.

- 3. What are the key issues and challenges facing older persons in your country/region regarding autonomy and independence? What studies and data are available?**

**ANSWER:** abuse and lack of specific laws to address specific issues to them.

- 4. What steps have been taken to ensure older persons' enjoyment of their right to autonomy and independence?**

**ANSWER:** The Lesotho Government enacted the laws that protect these rights and these are; the Land Act of 2010 and laws on inheritance. In terms of these laws, an elderly person can bequeath his or her property to the person of his or her choice without any interference.

- 5. What mechanisms are necessary, or already in place, for older persons to seek redress for the denial of autonomy and independence?**

**ANSWER:** Older persons can approach court of laws to enforce these rights.

- 6. What are the responsibilities of other, non-State, actors in respecting and protecting the right to autonomy and independence of older persons.**

**ANSWER:** There are Non-Governmental Organisations sensitising public about issues that affect elderly.

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