

Philippines' Response Related to the Guiding Questions
Department of Social Welfare and Development

1. EDUCATION, TRAINING, LIFE-LONG LEARNING AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

A. National Legal Framework

Legal Basis	Description
Republic Act 9994: Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010	<p>-Provides educational privileges as assistance to be granted to senior citizens to pursue education through provision of scholarship grants, financial aides, subsidies, and other incentives;</p> <p>-Under Section 2, the act "shall establish mechanisms whereby contributions of the senior citizens are maximized." Further, "the law provides for educational assistance to senior citizens to pursue secondary, tertiary, post tertiary, vocational and technical education, as well as short term courses for re-tooling in both private and public schools through provision of scholarships, grants, financial aids, subsidies and other incentives to qualified senior citizens, including support for books, learning materials, and uniform allowances, to the extent feasible. Provided, that senior citizens shall meet minimum admission requirements";</p> <p>- Section 5, " the Department of Education (DepEd), the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), in consultation with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and people's organizations (POs) for senior citizens, shall institute programs that will ensure access to formal and non-formal education." In the availment of trainings from the DTI, DOLE, and DOST-TRC, the older persons are exempted from training fees as stipulated in the IRR of RA 9994, Article 11 Sections 2 and 5.</p>
TESDA Circular No. 001 Series of 2019: Omnibus Guidelines for 2019 TESDA Scholarship Programs (TWSP, STEP, PESFA, UAQTEA)	-Includes senior citizens/older persons as special clients with less rigid qualifications, especially in STEP and TWSP
CHED Memorandum Order No. 56, Series of 2012: Revised Implementing Guidelines for the Student Financial Assistance	-Senior citizens/older persons can avail of educational assistance and scholarships

B. Availability, Adequacy, Accessibility, Equality, and Accountability

The Government, private sectors, academe, and other stakeholders have taken various and bold steps to ensure that education, training, life-long learning and capacity building services are available to older persons, adapted to their needs, suited to their preferences, motivations, and of high quality. These steps include the following:

1. Advocacy campaigns and information dissemination on the rights and privileges of senior citizens/older persons, including educational and training opportunities, are conducted in all regions through the Regional Coordinating and Monitoring Board, Offices of Senior Citizens Affairs (OSCA), and the Federation of Senior Citizens Association (FSCAPs);
2. Distribution of IEC materials during fora and other activities of senior citizens/older persons;
3. Inclusion of senior citizens/older persons in trainings and other capability-building activities conducted by TESDA, DTI, and other government agencies. TESDA has also recognized the need to provide programs designed to suit the needs and preferences of senior citizens/older persons regarding life-long learning as indicated in the National Technical Education and Skills Development Plan 2017-2022 (draft as of 25 May 2018), Chapter IV- Strategic Framework (pp 79-83).

While these steps and initiatives endeavor to provide senior citizens/older persons capacity building and other activities according to their preference, there still are key issues and challenges faced by older persons in the Philippines, which include lack of information or awareness on the available and accessible trainings, educational scholarships, and capacity- building services and lack or inadequate capability-building programs and trainings designed for senior citizens. Physical or health limitations on the part of senior citizens/older persons in terms of location/distance to available trainings and capability-building services also serves as a hindrance for older persons. There are also instances where older persons are plainly disinterested to avail of these activities.

As to mechanisms where older persons can lodge complaints, the OSCA is mandated by law "to assist the senior citizens in filing complaints or charges against any individual, establishments, business entity, institution, or agency refusing to comply with the privileges under this Act (RA 9994) before the Department of Justice (DOJ), the Provincial Prosecutor's Office, the regional or the municipal trial court, the municipal trial court, or the municipal circuit trial court.

2. SOCIAL PROTECTION AND SOCIAL SECURITY (INCLUDING SP FLOORS)

A. National Legal Framework

Legal Basis	Description
Republic Act 9994: Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010	The Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010 or RA 9994 and other national polices and laws seek to augment the needs of the elderly through various programs and services in terms of providing social pension to indigent senior citizens. Under Section 5, "indifgent senior citizens shall be entitled to a monthly stipend amounting to five hundred pesos (Php 500.00) to augment the daily subsistence and other medical needs of senior citizens, subject to a review every two (2) years by Congress, in consultation with the DSWD.
DSWD Memorandum Circular No. 03 Series of 2016	Provides implementing guidelines for the Unconditional Cash Transfer Program where cash transfers will be provided to those who are under the SocPen amounting to Php 200.00/month for the first year and Php 300.00/month for the second year and third year.
Th13 Congress passed the Republic Act 10654 (An Act Providing fo1 the Mandatory Philhealth Coverage for All Senior Citizens)	Grants automated coverage to all Filipino citizens who have reached the age of 60 and providing them with the full range of Philhealth benefits
National Health Insurance Act of 2013	The Government fully subsidizes premium contributions for indigent members, including senior citizens under the care of the DSWD, or any of its accredited institutions run by NGOs or any nonprofit private organizations.
Republic Act No. 10868: Centenarian Act of 2016	

B. Availability, Adequacy, Accessibility, Equality, and Accountability

Currently, the DSWD and other non-government and people's organizations are lobbying for the Expanded Social Act to cover older persons with Php 3,500 and below from other contributory schemes and to increase the amount of social pension from Php 500.00 to Php 1,000.00.

As to healthcare and support, RA 10654 ensures all senior citizens to be covered by Philhealth. Further, Philhealth Circular No. 2017-0017 emphasizes the coverage of senior citizens/older persons under the No Balance Billing (NBB) Policy.

The DSWD conducts fora, trainings, consultation dialogues, and other related activities that provide updates and orientation to older persons on their rights and privileges based on existing laws and policies, implementation of programs and services by different agencies, provide technical assistance to partners, such as OSCA, senior citizens organizations, and local social welfare development officers (LSWDOs).

The Department also conducts regular monitoring and program implementation reviews (PIRs) annually to assess and evaluate the implementation of the Social Pension for Indigent Senior Citizens. This includes the review of existing payment schemes to improve and facilitate payment

system to beneficiaries and to also strengthen collaboration and coordination with the concerned LGUs.

The DSWD and other government agencies involved in providing social protection programs and services for older persons act on complaints on cases of denial of older persons' rights to social security and social protection programs and services. Further, OSCA is established in every city and municipality to assist senior citizens in filing complaints against business entities, institutions or establishments that violate their rights. The National Monitoring and Coordinating Board (NCMB), an inter-agency coordinating and monitoring mechanism, tracks the regional and national implementation of RA 9994.

3. AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE

A. National Legal Framework

Legal Basis	Description
Republic Act 344	An Act to Enhance the Mobility of Disabled Persons by Requiring Certain Buildings, Institutions, Establishments and Public Utilities to install Facilities and Other Devices
Patient Bill of Rights	List of guarantees for those receiving medical care. It may take the form of a law or a non-binding declaration. Typically, a patient's bill of rights guarantees patients information, fair treatment, and autonomy over medical decisions, among other rights.

B. Availability, Adequacy, Accessibility, Equality, and Accountability

Health status, financial security, and availability of enabling institutions or mechanisms and age-friendly infrastructures help determine the older persons' enjoyment of living autonomously and independently.

While it is ideal for older persons to live independently (financially, physically, etc.), it is common in the Philippines for them to live with their immediate families and relatives especially when they are no longer physically able to take care of themselves. However, there are also cases when the immediate family becomes economically dependent on older persons and instances where older persons are being relied upon to take care and look after their grandchildren.

4. LONG TERM AND PALLIATIVE CARE

A. National Legal Framework

Legal Basis	Description
Executive Order No. 105 Series of 2003	Approves and directs the implementation of the program providing for group homes and foster homes for neglected, abandoned, abused, detached, and poor older persons and persons with disabilities.
Patient Bill of Rights	List of guarantees for those receiving medical care. It may take the form of a law or a non-binding declaration. Typically, a patient's bill of rights guarantees patients information, fair treatment, and autonomy over medical decisions, among other rights.
DSWD Administrative Order No.4 Series of 2010: Guidelines on the Home Care Support Services for Senior Citizens	Establishes community-based health care services for older persons.

B. Availability, Adequacy, Accessibility, Equality, and Accountability

Per Administrative Order No. 2017-0001 (Policy Guidelines on the Standards of Care for Older persons in All Healthcare Settings) by the Department of Health (DOH), long-term care is "a range of health care, personal care and social services provided to individuals who, due to frailty or level of physical or intellectual disability, are no longer able to live independently. Services may be provided in a person's home, in the community or in residential facilities (e.g., nursing homes or assisted living facilities)".

Palliative care is generally defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as "an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing the problem associated with life-threatening illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other problems, physical, psycho-social and spiritual.

The Department provides residential care services that provide long term or temporary multi-disciplinary care to senior citizens who are abandoned by their families. These services include social services, health and medical services, psychological services, skills training, group work activities, dietary services, home life /group living services, spiritual services (I.e. religious services, masses, confession, bible studies and etc.) and provision of assistive devices.

Further, the Department also provides community-based services for senior citizens. These services refer to the assistance that are provided to older persons while they remain in their own homes.

Older persons are kept active and productive members of the society even if they are in institutions. The four facilities for senior citizens (Golden Reception and Center for Elderly and other Special Needs in NCR; Haven for the Elderly in FO IV-A; Home for the Elderly in FO IX; and Home for the Aged in FO XI) were able to sustain its momentum in the delivery of programs and

services to abandoned, neglected and unattached senior citizens. Eight Hundred Ninety-Two (892) clients were served in these facilities.

These four centers are implementing the program "Elderly Leaders Delivering Resiliency in the Late Years". Under the program, a Protective and Participative Committee of Senior Citizens is formed in each center composed of senior citizens who are actively engaged in center and community-based activities, such as facilitating orientation for donors and visitors, assisting house parents in serving food and medicines, caring for co-clients, and coordinating with the Office of Senior Citizens Affairs in the barangays. An orientation cum planning activity was conducted in March 2017 that resulted in the agreement to adopt the project.