**Guiding questions for the focus areas of the x session of the open-ended working group on ageing: social protection and social security (including social protection floors)**

**National legal framework**

1. What are the legal provisions in your country that recognises the right to social security and social protection, including non-contributory and contributory old-age benefits? Do they have a constitutional, legislative or executive foundation?

Answer: In the Seychelles provisions are in place that recognise and safeguard the Seychellois people in this bracket;

1. Seychelles Pension Fund under the Seychelles Pension Fund Act, 2005. Governed by the Pension Board of Trustees. A mandatory 3% employee and 3% employer contribution current. Additional voluntary contribution is an option. A plan to increase the mandatory contribution of both employee and employer to 10.5% by 2035 with a 1% increase every 5 years is in force. The pension can be accessed from the age of 60 years.
2. Social Security Fund under the Social Security Act, 2010. Governed by the Social Security Fund Board. All citizens residing in Seychelles can access the Social Security from the age of 63 years.

**Availability**

2) What steps have been taken to guarantee universal coverage, ensuring that every older person has access to social security and social protection schemes including non-contributory, contributory and survivor old-age pensions, to ensure an adequate, standard of living in older age?

Answer: In place (currently being revised) The National Policy on Ageing, 2016 at Item 3.6: Social Protection System works parallel with the various Acts in force towards guaranteeing universal coverage for this access.

 The Seychellois Charter of Fundamental Human Rights and Freedom of the Constitution (1993) recognises in a number of articles, most notably Article 36, the right of the aged to special protection and has undertaken to make reasonable provisions to ensure the quality of life for the elderly.

The civil Code of Seychelles, as a subsidiary law to the Constitution, also establishes several rules which protect the family; specifying that “the children shall be bound to maintain their father or mother or other descendants”.

The National Council of The Elderly Act, 2018 is one of the latest enactment towards furthering this safeguard.

All citizens residing in Seychelles over the age of 63 years can access Social Security fund.

All contributors to the Pension Fund can access their pension from the age of 60 years.

3) What steps have been taken to ensure that every older person has access to social security and social protection schemes which guarantee them access to adequate and affordable health and care and support services for independent living in the older age?

Answer: The Social Security Act, 2010 and the Pension Fund Act, 2005 make provision for the older Seychellois people to have access to adequate funds for a dignified life style.

 The National policy on Ageing, 2016 at Item 3:11 a tool that guides provision of care.

The Public Health Service including hospitalised treatment and all medications is free of charge for all Seychelles citizens.

The enactment of the Council of Elderly Act, 2018 and a board for stewardship overseas this safeguarding.

Provision of home care services by Nurse Carers has enabled the elderly to remain in their homes in instances where assistance were required to remain independent.

A total of 9 elderly homes with construction starting in 1988 is another government commitment to ensure Elderlies at risk have a dignified lifestyle.

Means testing identified potential at-risk Elderlies in the community by the Agency For Social Protection with various provisions available such as assisting with a Social Housing Scheme for this age group.

Public transport scheme available where pensioners travel free of charge.

**Adequacy**

4) What steps have been taken to ensure the levels of social security and social protection payments are adequate for older persons to have access to an adequate standard of living, including adequate access to health care and social assistance.

Answer: Every year, the Social Security benefits for the elderly are reviewed and adjusted in line with the cost of living in the country.

**Accessibility**

5) What steps have been taken to ensure the older persons have adequate and accessible information on available social security and social protection schemes and how to claim their entitlements?

Answer: pamphlets from the Pension Fund and the Social Security are available readily in work places for staff to access about retirement.

Government Radio and TV stations with programs that target this audience group provide those explanations and a bigger focus takes place when changes occur.

The local government in all the districts play a large roll in decimating those information organising meetings to target groups.

The senior Citizens Association plays a big role in Disseminating information for this group in the communities.

6) The design and implementation of normative and political framework related to social security and social protection benefits included an effective and meaningful participation of older persons?

Answer: The Senior Citizens Association has an active role and participates fully in decision making involving their age group.

Government agencies do “road shows’ to get the elderly group’s input for changes impacting them.

The National Elderly Council has a role towards increasing further participation of aged groups in decision making affecting them.

**Equality and decision making**

7) Which are the measures adopted to ensure equitable access by older persons to social security and social protection, paying special attention to groups in vulnerable situations?

Answer: Means testing by The Agency for Social Protection with accommodation assistance both short and permanent basis made available for the Elderlies. Emergency housing is also available for urgent cases.

The 9 elderly homes in the community is also as a response for Elderlies who falls in the gap accommodation wise.

The government is in the process of mapping the communities and profile our Elderlies in order to work towards prevention of social ills amongst the Elderlies.

**Accountability**

8) What mechanisms are in place to ensure social security and social protection schemes are effective and accountable.

Answer: Inbuilt audit systems in those 2 departments.

Yearly audits by the Auditor general.

Yearly financial reports by the CEO

The elderly or representative if not satisfied with outcomes of interactions have avenues of redress under both the Social Security Act, 2010 and the Pension Fund act, 2005.

9) What judicial and non-judicial mechanisms are in place for older persons to complain and seek redress for denial of their right to social security and social protection?

Answer: The elderly or their representative if not satisfied with outcomes of interactions have avenues of getting redress under both the Social Security Act, 2010 and the Pension Fund Act, 2005.