



National Commission for Human Rights

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THE SUBMISSION OF THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS OF RWANDA TO TWELFTH OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP FOR THE PURPOSE OF STRENGTHENING THE PROTECTION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF OLDER PERSONS

Focus areas: Contribution of older persons to sustainable development/ Economic security

National legal and policy framework which recognize older persons ‘rights to participate in and contribute to sustainable development

A. Laws

- The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda of 2003 revised in 2015 recognizes the rights of older persons to participate in and contribute to sustainable development. In addition, the Constitution guarantees for older persons the minimum essential level of the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, in particular the right to an adequate standard of living.¹ Furthermore, under the Constitution the State has also the duty, to undertake special actions aimed at the welfare of the indigent, the older and other vulnerable groups;
- The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples ‘Rights on the Rights of Older Persons which guarantees the promotion and the protection of the rights of older persons has been ratified by Rwanda;
- The Law N° 29/2017 of 29/06/2017 establishing the long-term savings scheme “(EJO HEZA)” and determining its organization which promotes the culture of saving among the citizen/residents in Rwanda, the universal access to pension and social security inclusion, the financial inclusion, economic growth, poverty alleviation to attain higher standards of living;
- The Law N° 66/2018 of 30/08/2018 regulating labor in Rwanda which specifies that there is no age limit for work;
- The Law N° 86/2013 of 11/09/2013 establishing the general statutes for public service which provides the right to pension.

¹ Articles 27, 48, 51 of the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda of 2003 revised in 2015

B. POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

1. The National Older Persons Policy which reinforces the Government of Rwanda's commitment to promote the value and participation of older Persons in communities;
2. Social Protection Policy and its related sector strategic plan;
3. Vision Umurenge Program (VUP) that provides some additional support to extremely poor older people who live in household with no labor capacity.

Data, statistics and research available regarding older persons

According to the Fourth Rwanda Population and Housing Census (RPHC4)

- The population of Rwanda is 10,515,973 residents, of which 52% are women and 48% men. There are 511,738 (4.9%) older persons (60 and above) living in Rwanda out of a total population of 10,515,973 inhabitants².
- The older Persons are composed of 207,239 older men and 304,499 older women.
- More than one in two elderly persons (53%) is currently employed. Elderly people who are taking care of their home/family represent 6% of elderly people, while 1% of all elderly people are unemployed.
- The vast majority of elderly people are self-employed in their main job in informal work (86%); only 6% are employees.

Equality and non-discrimination

- The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda provides a tangible demonstration of Rwanda's commitment to equal opportunities, prosperity and wellbeing for all:

a) Provide and highlight the importance of balanced intergenerational relationships based on mutual respect ;

b) promote the full participation of older Persons in Rwanda's national development³;

- The Law No 59/2008 of 10/09/2008 on prevention and punishment of gender-based violence punishes violence against an elderly person⁴.

² Fourth Population and Housing Census, Rwanda, 2012, Thematic Report Population size, structure and distribution January 2014

³ Articles 10, 46 and 48 of the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda of 2003 revised in 2015

⁴ Article 32 of the same law.

Remedies and Redress

Some institutions and programs for remedies and redress:

1. The Labor inspectors at district level;
2. The Public Service Commission;
3. The National Commission for Human Rights;
4. The Office of the Ombudsman ;
5. The Courts;
6. Inteko z'Abaturage (Local Citizen Assemblies)
7. Abunzi committees (Local mediation committees)
8. Legal Aid for poor and vulnerable persons.

Rwanda good practices to ensure older persons' participation in, and contribution to sustainable development.

- The long-term savings scheme (Ejo Heza) for promoting the culture of saving among the citizen/residents in Rwanda;
- The universal access to pension and social security inclusion,;
- The financial inclusion, economic growth, poverty alleviation to attain higher standards of living.

Challenges faced by older persons

- Although a number of policies and strategies were adopted for promoting inclusive development for all, there are still emerging needs of elderly people.
 - To date, very few statutory programs exist to cater for the needs of the majority of older persons especially those in the informal sector.
 - Non updated statistics
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