



Report on National Efforts to Enhance the Rights of Older Persons On the Occasion of the International Day of Older Persons

On December 14, 1990, the United Nations General Assembly designated October 1st as the International Day of Older Persons. Since then, a number of documents related to the rights of older persons have been adopted such as the United Nations Principles for Older Persons and the Madrid International Plan of Action on Aging. At the international level, interest and action towards human rights of older persons has increased. In 2010, the United Nations General Assembly established an open-ended working group on aging to study the international framework of the human rights of older persons and to identify relevant gaps and the best approaches to address them. In 2014, the United Nations Human Rights Council appointed the first independent expert on the enjoyment of human rights by older persons.



On this occasion, the SSCHR Technical Secretariat issues this report to highlight national efforts to enhance the rights of older persons. The report reviews the constitutional and legal framework for the rights of older persons, the strategic planning for their care and safeguarding their rights, and Government policies and procedures to support older persons economically and socially as well as to enhance their health care services, in recognition that they are among groups that need special care, and for their important role in society. It should be noted that the number of older persons in Egypt (over 60 years old) reached about 7 million citizens on January 1st, 2020, representing 7.1% of the total population, and this percentage is expected to rise to 17.9% by 2052.

First: The Constitutional and Legal Framework for Protecting the Rights of Older Persons

The Constitution specifies an article to safeguard the rights of older persons. Accordingly, the State is committed to guaranteeing their health, economic, social, cultural, and recreational

rights, providing them with an adequate pension that guarantees a decent life, and enables them to participate in public life. The State is obliged to take into consideration, in its planning of public utilities, the needs of older persons, and encourage civil society organizations to participate in providing care for them. The State is also constitutionally obligated to provide care and protection for older women, to take care of veterans, and to provide social insurance and social security services for aging.

In September 2021, the Egyptian Cabinet approved a draft law on the rights of older persons, which is in compliance with the Constitution and which aims to provide protection and care for older persons, to guarantee their full enjoyment of all basic rights and freedoms on equal basis and ensures their dignity and securing a decent life. Under the draft law, the State is obligated to:

- Protect their right to life, and adequate food, drink, clothing, housing, and healthcare.
- Respect their freedom of choice, based upon their independent will, and not to discriminate against them on the basis of their age or religion.
- Ensure their equality in the enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms; and to remove all obstacles and impediments that hinder the fulfillment of these rights.
- Ensure suitable life conditions and a decent life for older persons, within a framework of respect for human dignity by providing the highest possible level of basic requisites for these conditions, such as money, housing, and health care; in addition to social and psychological care (which includes family solidarity, institutional care, home care for older persons and the right to psychological care and rehabilitation).
- Enable older persons to exercise their right to: education, learning and work, use of public facilities and services, access to information, freedom of expression and opinion, the right to practice sports, cultural and recreational activities; to participate in political and social life; the right to legal and judicial protection, and the exemptions prescribed for them.

In addition, the draft law stipulated that a fund called “Older Persons Care Fund” shall be established within the Ministry of Social Solidarity.



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Second: Strategic Planning for the Rights of Older Persons

- The National Strategy for Human Rights addresses the rights of older persons and the expected results therein include the expansion of social protection programs for older persons; the increase of the financial allocations to the Government's social care institutions, and the enhancement of their inspection; the facilitation of access of older persons to appropriate health care; the encouragement of civil society organizations to participate in providing care for them; participation in public life, which enhances their contribution in relevant policies formulation; the organization of an annual community dialogue aimed at identifying gaps, areas of interest, and appropriate means of interaction regarding issues of older persons; the enhancement of their access to education; the enhancement of their participation in cultural life; the issuance of integrated legislation to enhance the rights of older persons, the strengthening of legal aid for older persons; the facilitation of their access to means of litigation; and the encouragement of the expansion of the establishment of care homes for older persons.
- A Higher Committee for Older Persons was formed under the chairmanship of the Minister of Social Solidarity with the membership of all parties concerned with the affairs of older persons, in addition to older persons representatives. The purpose is to develop an integrated plan for older persons' care in Egypt, and work on developing legislation regulating the conditions and services of older persons. In addition to enhance coordination among programs of the ministries and bodies concerned with older persons' care. The Committee also aims to propose programs and activities that ensure that older persons are recognized for their important and continuous role, and active participation in society and to establish an information network for the places, and services provided to older persons, in which all concerned parties can upload their input to the Government's website and which will be periodically updated.

Third: Policies and Procedures

a. Health Care for Older Persons

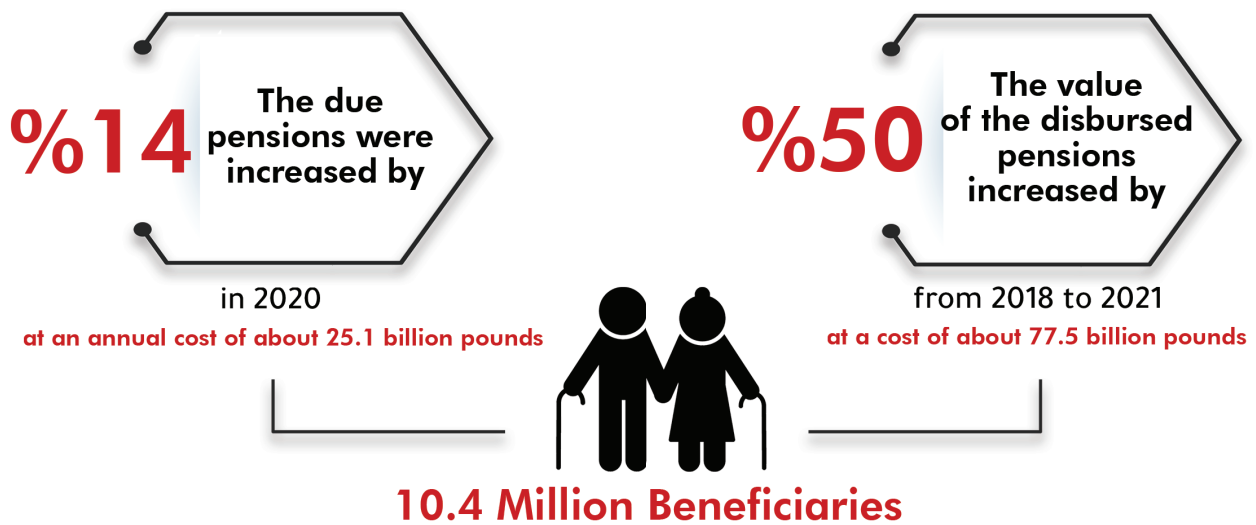
- A project is being implemented to upgrade rehabilitation centers for the elderly during post medical care and pre-home care such as motor rehabilitation. Among the services provided by the project are providing medical care to the elderly pertaining to different specialties in clinics, following up on common diseases, availing medication, raising health awareness, in addition to having a mechanism for emergency situations.
- Within the framework of Presidential health initiatives, 61 million citizens were examined, of whom about 65 percent were older persons.

- The Ministry of Health has facilitated the vaccination of older persons who wish to receive Coronavirus vaccines.



b. Social Protection

- The legislative reform of the social insurance and pension systems was completed with the issuance of Social Insurance Law No. 148 of 2019.
- The State granted a security pension to older persons who do not receive an insurance pension and have no income. The Government introduced the “Haya Karima” (Dignified Life) program in 2015, which aims to extend the social protection umbrella to include older persons by providing a decent life for those who are unable to work. The program grants a pension to older persons starting from the age of sixty-five or to those who suffer from a disability. The amount of cash support for these programs has reached about 16.5 billion pounds.
- The value of the disbursed pensions increased by 50% from 2018 to 2021 for 10.4 million beneficiaries, at a cost of about 77.5 billion pounds, and in 2020, the due pensions were increased by 14% at an annual cost of about 25.1 billion pounds.



c. Homes for Older Persons, Adult Day Care Clubs and Older Persons’ Service Offices

- The Ministry of Social Solidarity runs a number of homes for older persons, which are social institutions equipped for their residence, where appropriate health, psychological, cultural and social care programs are provided. These care homes accept cases of men who have reached the age of sixty years and over, and women of fifty-five years of age and over. Adult day care clubs have also been established, which are day centers

through which various services to older persons and social, health and cultural care programs are provided. The number of nursing homes for older persons reached (171) care homes that serve (3000) older persons; (192) adult day care clubs serve about (34,000) older persons.

- The project to develop care institutions for older persons has been completed in ten governorates, with a total expense of 10,927,000 LE. The project aimed to develop and upgrade the infrastructure and equipment necessary for a number of care homes, and to raise the efficiency of the administrative system and caregivers in homes for older persons to develop and improve professional practices and integrated care services
- The Ministry of Social Solidarity established older persons' service offices in care homes and adult day care clubs. These offices serve older persons in their homes by providing many services such as meal preparation, health and social care, and assistance, or by providing various services related to water, electricity and telephone facilities and the delivery of pensions, and household repair and maintenance.
- The "Elderly Companion" project was launched in 2019, which aims to provide home care for older persons within the family and provide an alternative to institutional care. The project aims to develop a legal regulatory vision for the profession of older persons' companion, which guarantees the rights of older persons through the rehabilitation, training and employment of a number of companions for the elderly and providing employment opportunities. Furthermore, the project aims to unify a structured, comprehensive and approved training curriculum for preparing and training older persons' companions and encouraging associations to work on the project, as well as preparing an integrated database to provide access to the service of older persons' companion.



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d. Economic Empowerment

- The Ministry of Social Solidarity provides projects for older persons in the field of developmental care, such as projects for low-income individuals, projects for productive families, and projects for rural women, in addition to training a number of older persons on artisanship and professions according to their skills and capabilities in elderly care institutions.



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- Nasser Social Bank launched a deposit under the name of “to give back” which is directed to older persons aged 60 years and over. The value of the deposit starts from one thousand Egyptian pounds and reaches the amount of two million pounds and is due for an annual return of 10.75% or a monthly return of 10.25%.
- In order to alleviate the suffering of older persons, during the year 2020, older persons over the age of 70 were fully exempted from public transportation fares, and older persons over the age of 65 years were exempted from 50% of public transportation fares.

f. Protection of Homeless Adults

- The Ministry of Social Solidarity, through the Homeless Adult Protection Program, took on a large number of cases of homeless older persons (homeless, beggary, psychologically or mentally ill). Within this program, a number of older persons were either reunited with their families or admitted into care institutions. Within the program, various services are provided to homeless people, including health and educational services, meals, blankets, and psychological and social support and this is being achieved through through (17) mobile units and (19) institutions that have been developed during the past three years.