

REGIONAL WORKSHOP: EVIDENCE-BASED AGEING-RELATED POLICIES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA, NAIVASHA 16-18 NOVEMBER 2021

Presentation: *Supporting older persons in their homes and communities in Rwanda.*

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CONTEXT OF AGEING IN RWANDA

In 2020, 404.02 thousand people were aged 65 years and above, an increment from 110.25 thousand in 1971. It is expected to see an increase of 300% in its over 60's in the coming decade

Elderly care work takes place in a variety of settings but mostly in families (most of them in poor conditions).

Older persons suffer from loneliness, isolation, chronicle diseases and poverty.

Some are hardly able to meet or satisfy their basic needs (food, water, healthcare, etc).

Less than 7% receive pension.

Some vulnerable older persons receive direct support from the Government.

No professional accompaniment.

LIVING ARRANGEMENT

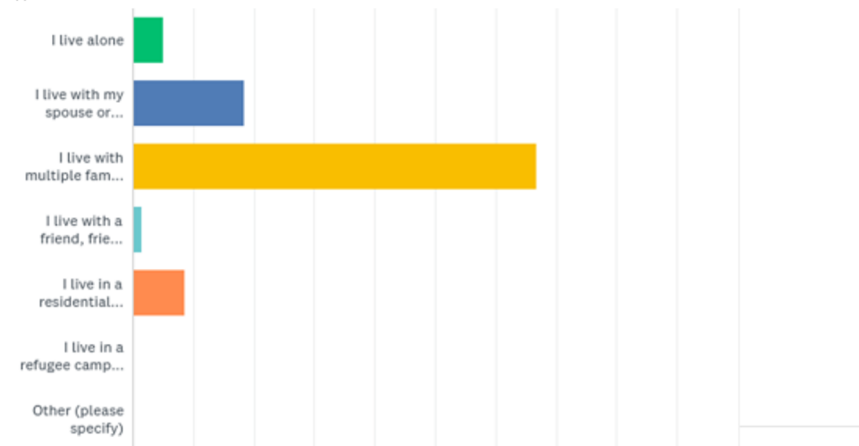
Living arrangement?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I live alone	4.96%	7
I live with my spouse or partner only	18.44%	26
I live with multiple family members	66.67%	94
I live with a friend, friends or members of my community	1.42%	2
I live in a residential care facility	8.51%	12
I live in a refugee camp or temporary housing provided by the state or another agency	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		141

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Living arrangement?

Answered: 141 Skipped: 1



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How important is it to you to be able to freely decide for yourself where you live and with whom?

Answered: 141 Skipped: 1

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very important	53.90%	76
Important	31.21%	44
Somewhat important	12.77%	18
Not important at all	2.13%	3
TOTAL		141

Older persons in residential homes



Older persons in the community



POLITICAL WILL: LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Government of Rwanda;

1. Signed and approved the protocol (to the African charter on Human and people's rights) on the rights of older persons in Africa.
2. Included older persons in the social ***protection policy, in the NCDs policy and in the community health workers' guidelines.***
3. Institutionalized the commemoration of the IDOP countrywide , where instead of just one day, it is a week long campaign on ageing, around the 1st of October, and the whole community is mobilized (through community work) to identify older persons and support the most vulnerable among them, then report back to the line Ministry within one month.
4. Approved a stand alone National Older Persons' Policy with 4 pillars detailing each one's role in the support of older persons.
5. Prioritized older persons in the COVID-19 vaccination (1st: 70+, 60+, 50+, 40+ and now 18+, and CHWs were mobilized to identify older persons who might be left out and guide health professionals to meet them at home for vaccination.
6. Supported the UN convention through written submissions to the UN OEWG.
7. Involved the First Lady in the campaign, promoting the welfare of older persons, during the IDOP.

Gap: Weak coordination mechanism and resources in the area of ageing.

ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY

1. All the above mentioned Government achievements are the results of civil society's advocacy, supported by the National Commission of Human rights, the Rwandan Senate and the Rwanda elders advisory forum, which show a very good coordination and partnership among different stakeholders.
2. There are some initiatives training young people who remind OPs when to take their medicines, ready to be their messengers; sent to the market or bank, etc.
3. A national ageing platform has been created to ensure strong and effective advocacy and community awareness-raising, covering the whole country.
4. Establishment of elderly support groups in the community, as platforms to share their feelings and find the solutions, to ensure evidence-based advocacy.
4. Continuous organization of multi stakeholder workshops (GoR, HRIs, Parliament, CSOs and Ops), to discuss about the strategies to improve lives of older persons and each one's role.
5. Creation of awareness among youth groups, women's networks, mass media and local leaders, about healthy and dignified ageing and urging them to use their potential to support older persons in their families and community, through intergenerational cultural events.
6. Establishment of 4 centres for genocide survivor widows (2 by CSOs and 2 by the GoR, with the support of the First Lady, 12 residential homes owned by the churches.

Gap: Civil society supporting older persons doesn't have enough skills and resources to perform their work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Government: Put in place a policy and guidelines, regulating elderly care at home and in the community, including training of caregivers and appointment of community-based social workers for older persons.

Government: To establish elderly care centres for leisure, sports and entertainment.

Development partners and CSOs: To invest in and support care for the elderly in different settings.

CSOs: To create strong networking and learning tours to share good practices and learn from each other.

Government: To strengthen the coordination and partnership among different stakeholders on ageing and others from different sectors.



THANK YOU

MURAKOZE



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