Evidence-Based Policies on Ageing in Africa?

Reflections based on MIPAA+15 and others

Selsah Pasali
The African Center for Gender
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

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Measuring Population Ageing:
Bridging Research & Policy
MIPAA+15 Results

- 17 out of 31 African countries have developed comprehensive and stand-alone national plans/policies/strategies on ageing

- Budget allocation for implementation however is rarely integrated into such plans.

- Mauritius by far the most successful country in Africa addressing the ageing issues.
  - Universal non-contributory pension system since 1958.
  - University for Elderly linking youth with elderly

- 23 out of 31 countries report major challenges in implementation of formulated policies.

- Operationalizing the policies prove to be very difficult in the absence of data to guide programmatic action.
• There is a long list of challenges faced by governments and they largely circle around operationalizing policies for successful implementation

  • Insufficient financial resources
  • Insufficient political will
  • Insufficient cooperation between ministries
  • Insufficient research and translation of research into policy formulation
    • 9/31: data disaggregated by age/sex on critical indicator
    • 9/31: number of people by age/sex with access to safe water/electricity
    • 5/31: number of people by age/sex with health insurance
    • 4/31: disability adjusted life expectancy data
  • Insufficient human resources
How to Tackle these Challenges?

• Integrated Digital ID Systems
  • SDG 16.9: Legal identify for all
  • SDGs: Leave no one behind

• Digitizing the process...
  • Efficiency
  • Equity
  • Human Right

• Civil Registries and Vital Statistics
  • Substantial improvement across the continent
  • Potential to update/sustain the integrated digital system

• Service Delivery aspect
  • Where do people live? Who are they? How many are they?
• Progress in Namibia and Botswana…
Evidence-Based Policies Critical for Gender Gap

  - 10 countries: decreasing trend in gender gap
  - 1 country: no change
  - 43 countries: increasing trend in gender gap in favour of women

- Women therefore spend more time with their children and grandchildren. They have more incentives than men to invest in their children/grandchildren.

- There is also a major cost of spending more time with children and grandchildren: time poverty and health problems
  - Involvement in patient care (and negative externality on their own health)
  - HV/AIDS care and orphan care (60% in Zimbabwe and Namibia).

- Risk of disability increasing along with other health problems while geriatric medicine is largely absent.
  - Only 8/31 countries have public geriatric training programmes.
  - Screening needed for cervical cancer which is curable.
THANK YOU!

more info:

Selsah Pasali
pasali@un.org

UNECA.ORG