

## **DAVE OMOKARO FOUNDATION NIGERIA**

### **RESPONSE TO GUIDING QUESTIONS ON THE TOPICS OF EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION AND NEGLECT, VOILENCE AND ABUSE**

#### **EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION**

Whereas the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1991) section 40 (20) (b) establishes the purpose of Government to be the security and welfare of people and its section 16 (2) (d) pledges suitable and adequate shelter and food; old age care and pensions and the welfare of persons with disability while providing for all citizens; Whereas the Constitution guarantees every Nigerian across the life course/ across the age band inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected; **there are systemic negative attitudes, stereotypes and myths about older persons which have become embedded and operational in development policy matrix and Institutional structure and thought process that discriminate against older persons**

1a) The Nigerian constitution guarantees equality for all ages

1b) However, the constitution does not forbid discrimination explicitly on the basis of age; there are yet no legislations that prohibit all forms of discrimination or social; and systemic processes which marginalize older persons

- Does Nigeria produce information about discrimination against older persons in the following or other areas. If so , what are the findings

**EMPLOYMENT:** The Government has not produced information about discrimination against older people and so much is not known about labor market participation in Nigeria but there are multi-disciplinary researches conducted by University scholars on Labor Market Participation and Income Distribution among the Aged

**FINDINGS:** With compulsory statutory retirement age from public service in Nigeria at 60 years except for Judges and academics at 70, many older persons are forced out of work before they could make enough investment in anticipation of old age thereby increasing their risk of poverty. No other avenues for continuing engagement of older persons and earnings from wage work.

**Data from National Population Commission (NPopC) show that 72% of older persons live in rural areas and are farmers.**

- Labor market participation level among farmers decreases with old age, illness and education

- The distribution of income in the labor market analysis of older persons shows that inequality is higher among elderly males in the income earning activities compared to the elderly female
- On the percentage share of the distribution of the labor market income, it was found that the income of elderly male was higher than that of elderly females in all income types except for self-employment

## **ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES**

Studies by the Dave Omokaro Foundation on Nigeria Population Dynamics, Ageing and Thrust of National Policies have shown that Older persons are not targeted beneficiaries of programs and services as sector policies are not explicit on equitable access and non-discrimination. Sector policies and initiatives including Health, housing, poverty eradication, income generation programs; health insurance coverage; Roll back Malaria do not support fair and equitable access to integrated services so that older persons including those with disabilities, can access services. Policies do not ensure that older persons receive good and coordinated responses to their need at any point of entry into the service system

**Social Protection:** As documented in a review of ageing situation in Nigeria (Toguno Bickesteth and Akinyemi 2014), there is no non-contributory social security for older persons in Nigerians except for two States; (Osun and Ekiti States) that provide paltry sum of money of about five thousand naira (less than USD 20) as monthly benefits to selected vulnerable elderly. Only 4% of older persons have formal pension coverage. There are no sustainable retirement funding options for people in the large informal economy. Policies on pensions and benefits and employment do not support people to live well in later life and does not empower older people.

**Health Care:** There are gaps in health and social services delivery to older persons within the context of their peculiar health challenges and the burden of sole family care givers.

Due to greater distance and low funding for rural population, rural dwellers especially elderly persons are not able to get to the hospital quickly due to long distance as most efforts of government is concentrated in urban centres. Most cannot afford the stress and strain of the travel and most lack the financial resources and supportive systems to enable them undertake such. **Policies do not offer** adequate mix of health services that meet the various needs of all eligible Nigerians of all ages from all communities with suitable service pathways and coordinating processes eg. Primary Health Care is not age friendly and Secondary Health Care offers no geriatric care services. Therefore older persons have no access to continuum care ranging from health promotion to disease prevention to the provision of primary health care, acute care treatment, rehabilitation, community care for chronic health problems, physical

and mental rehabilitation and palliative care for older persons suffering painful or incurable illness or disease.

**Social Care:** In Nigeria evidence from research shows a weak institutional base to tackle the care and support of older persons. In countless families, local communities, and in city centres across Nigeria, there are growing numbers of elderly living in extreme poverty; facing core concerns of hunger and starvation, lack of continuum of health care services and facilities formal long term care. Older Person face false accusations especially of witchcraft based on stereotypes and harmful traditional practices like widowhood rites.

### **Justice and Inheritance**

All forms of stigmatization against older person exist especially older women. As females in most part of Nigeria, custom forbids them to inherit from fathers and also from husbands.

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