



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
16 August 2023

English only

---

## Human Rights Council

### Fifty-fourth session

11 September–6 October 2023

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

## **Report of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons on her visit to Nigeria**

**Comments by the State\***

---

\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



1. Nigeria wishes to appreciate and commend the UN Independent Expert on the Enjoyment of All Human Rights by Older Persons, Dr. Claudia Mahler on her 12-day visit to Nigeria and her comprehensive Report. The Report as procedural norm dictates to highlight best practices and identify gaps in the implementation of existing laws and policies relating to the rights of older persons

2. Nigeria notes with satisfaction, the Independent Expert's Report indicating her unhindered access while in Nigeria. All relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies in the 36 States and the Federal Capital Territory, as far as time and logistics allowed. Dr Claudia Mahler who held meetings on thematic subject matter mostly in- person with multi-sector actors and some - on line, with stakeholders. Nigeria notes fair assessments and the acknowledgment of Nigeria's legal policy institutional, frameworks, mechanisms, procedures and multi- sector programs and implementation strides which are nationally coordinated by the National Senior Citizens Centre set up the National Senior Citizens Centre (NSCC) Act and guided by the National Senior Citizens Center Strategic Roadmap on Aging 2022- 2032.

3. Nigeria also notes the commendation of Nigeria's Aging Mainstreaming efforts and the creation of new opportunities to activate developmental progress made to strengthen the protection of human rights of older persons. However, the thematic area of income security-enterprise and Livelihood Development programs was blind-sided and not named among Nigeria's efforts to prioritize right to income security.

4. Efforts at continuing engagements and capacity enhancement programs; setting benchmark and minimum standards in training and Certification of care givers and accreditation of care Agency operators and mainstreaming of Geriatric social care into Nigeria's National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) regulated by the National Board for Technical Education, with career paths thereby upgrading the status of care givers from stereotyped and disregarded to skills and competence cadre. This is Nigeria's foundational process in developing long term care systems and strengthening home based care to stop abuse of older persons.

5. In response to **paragraph 37** under the sub- heading; **Violence and Abuse, the report suggests that Nigerian** government's response to effectively tackle violence and abuse against older persons remain limited, due to lack of appropriate legal protection provisions and adequate resource. Nigeria wishes to refer to the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAP) Act 2015 which the Independent Expert references and would like to respond by adding that NAPTIP, the Agency with the mandate and prosecutorial authority has established COMPREHENSIVE CALL CENTERS and TOLL-FREE NATIONAL LINES to adequately respond to complaints from older persons or concerned citizens These lines are deployed in campaigns by the National Citizens Center, older persons associations, Stakeholders Consultative Forums which includes civil society organizations across the States. They have also Rapid Response and Remedy Squads and trained Protection Officers; whose duties are to educate, remedy, and redress and provide protection to survivors of abuse. NSCC has successfully mainstream older persons and works closely utilizing all NAPTIP structures and personnel. The Legal Aid Council of Nigeria equally has call lines to respond to abused indigent older persons and to provide legal representation at no cost. For update the National Senior Citizens Centre (NSCC), to mark 2023 World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAD) on June 15, launched the National Elder Justice- Campaign aimed at mobilizing collective Action in partnership with Public and the Private Sector the building of support network to facilitate understanding, prevention, identification, treatment and where called for, prosecution of offenders. It aims to advocate for age friendly social and institutional processes which enable access.

6. In **paragraph 38** under the sub-heading **Social Protection and Rights to Social Security and Work**. The report suggests that there was no explicit recognition of older persons' right to social protection in Nigerian legal framework and it weakens older person's full enjoyment of their human rights. **The National Social Investment Programme Agency Bill was signed into law laying the legislative foundation for the establishment of the Social Protection Agency, with statutory mandate to operationalize the National Social Protection Policy. The policy goal is to mitigate poverty and provide assistance including social insurance and work schemes to empower the poor and vulnerable in Nigeria.** It aims to provide a legal and institutional framework for the establishment and

management of the National Social Investment in Nigeria. Older Persons have been clearly listed as targets and identified as beneficiaries of the social programme including Social Care.

7. In **Section 4**, It is to be noted that the National Social Protection Policy provides an overarching policy and implementation architecture with framework for Mainstreaming in a coordinated manner, all social programs of various population group including persons with disabilities, IDPs and older persons. The National Social Safety-Net Coordinating Office (NASCCO) data captured the poor, vulnerable and Older Persons were mainstreamed in the Grant for the Poor and Vulnerable.

8. In **Paragraph 50**, the Report expresses concern for Older Persons who reside in urban areas due to the lack access to public services in an age-friendly, supportive and enabling environment. Nigeria welcomes the observations and recommendations and wish to put on record the listing of Age-friendly environment and Services in Nigeria's National Plan of Action on Ageing and Project Activities 2021 - 2025, which have been included in the National Development Plan 2021- 2025. The strategic documents and implementation framework indicate that Nigeria has commenced its plan for expanding social inclusion and participation of older persons through creating Age-friendly Environment and services. NSCC in partnership with National Identity Management Commission (NIMC) has commenced the Progressive Registration of Senior Citizens for the issuance of a National Identity multipurpose discount based; priority access based and social safety- net access cards to older persons. The cards will enable access to age-friendly services, priority access, discounts financial inclusion. NSCC has developed core multi-sector indicators of Age-friendly service and development of AgeWatch Index for ranking sector operators like banks, hospitals, transportation and aviation, services for their compliance.

9. In **paragraph 51** of the report highlights challenges of homelessness and its effect on older persons. Nigeria is responding to the simultaneous economic social and infrastructural challenges particularly occasioned by effect of insurgencies and communal conflicts with consequent displacements of persons including older persons. We wish to update the Independent Expert's Report with regards to Nigeria's progressive efforts which was at infancy stage during the IE's visit. The National- Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI) has unveiled with the ground breaking ceremony, of the construction of Home Away from Home Smart City Settlements across the country for IDPs and Refugees. This effort has been piloted in 7 locations across six states (Zamfara, Edo, Katsina, Borno, Kano and Nasarawa States) Each of the cities comprises of between 100 units and 50 units of 2- bedrooms houses and between 50 units and 20 units of studio apartments.

10. In **paragraph 52** on the issue sanitation and drinkable water, Nigeria has a Roadmap which provides a guide towards achieving an open defecation free country in 2025 using different approaches such as capacity development; promotion of improved technology options through sanitation marketing; provision of sanitation facilities in public places; Community-Led Total Sanitation; promotional and media campaigns; creating enabling environment and coordination mechanism. In this strategy document an indicative investment required for achieving the roadmap is estimated, showing the cost by government at all levels and the private sector, especially for construction of sanitation facilities in public places and the cost by households for construction of household sanitation facilities. The roadmap also provides a basis for the development of the Partnership for Expanded Water Supply and Sanitation (PEWASH) programme which aims to establish a multi-sectoral partnership between government, development partners and the private sector to support the empowerment of rural dwellers in Nigeria through the provision of adequate water supply and sanitation services. The Federal Ministry of Water Resources will provide the enabling environment, leadership and coordination required in achieving this target by working together with communities, civil society, development agencies, private sector and government at sub-national levels.

11. In **paragraph 55** on the absence of medications by older person generally being unavailable or missing from stocks in medical centers, NSCC have secured partnership with National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) WHO Nigeria, and Executive Secretaries of States Primary Health Care Development Agencies for the Mainstreaming of Integrated Care of older persons into Primary Health Care Services. In

addition, The National Health Insurance Authority Act, 2022 which repeals the National Health Insurance Scheme Act. The law provides that all indigen citizens enjoy free healthcare funded by tiers of governments in the country and their partners. The law brought hope to at least 83 million poor Nigerians, which includes older persons who could not pay out-of-pocket for health. To make the NHIA more functional, the Act creates a council to guide its operations. Besides, the Act also provides for Third Party Administrators (TPAs) to act as health insurance promoters and ensure enrollees get satisfactory services. The NHIS provided enrollees in the formal sector programmes such as mobile health, group, individual and family social health insurance programme (GIFSHIP). Its informal sector programmes were tertiary institution social health insurance, community-based social health insurance, and public-private partnership social health insurance. Section three (k) of the Act makes it a duty for the organisation to advocate for funds for the Basic Health Care Provision Fund, while paragraph J of the section requires that the NHIA provide and maintain information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure and capability for the integration of all data on health schemes in the country, including the state health insurance schemes.

12. **In paragraph 61** of the report highlights the possibility of a large number of older persons being left alone without appropriate support due to eroding family support occasioned by socio- economic factors. NSCC in collaboration with the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) is working towards the development of quality assurance systems and regulatory framework for training, classification, recognition and certification of geriatric social care skills, assessment of training centres and training providers and the accreditation of geriatric care agencies/facilities. This would involve the training of work force for home-based care, Geriatric Social Care Attendants, Geriatric Social Care Attendant I, Geriatric Social Care Attendant II, Geriatric Social Care Technicians etc

13. **In paragraph 63** of your report suggest the lack of support and regulation by government for quality and safety in nursing homes. In response, the UN Independent Expert may wish note that the MoU signed between NSCC and the Federal Ministry of Health and NBTE has facilitated multi-disciplinary and sector wide expert group workshop, development of benchmark and minimum standards, as well as policy guidelines for national and subnational standardization and regulation of social skills sector including, training basic informal care givers. Nigeria setting a government- led Geriatric Social care skills council as, assessors of training and standards for care facilities, training providers and training centers.

14. **In paragraph 64** in sub- heading **Humanitarian and Emergency Settings**. The IE expressed concern in her report about Nigeria's response in humanitarian and emergency situations. In response, to the humanitarian situation caused by flood which devastated several communities in the country. Considering the vulnerability of older persons and the necessity to attend to their peculiar needs, NSCC set up Help Desks in eleven (11) camps in Delta State. This was done in partnership with Red Cross, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA). The Help desks instituted procedures and processes for minimizing discrimination and dignified and prioritized treatments in camps, increasing visibility.

15. The Independent Expert may wish to avert her mind to the fact that prior to 2021, Nigeria did not have a dedicated agency catering to the needs of older persons. With the presence of NSCC interventions and support for older persons is increasing more coordinated, structured and impactful.

---