Gender and Ageing in African Contexts

Policy, Legal and Institutional Development
Regional Workshop Report, Nairobi, 4-5 June 2019

HelpAge International is a global network of organisations promoting the right of all older people to lead dignified, healthy and secure lives.

Gender and Ageing in African Contexts *Policy, Legal and Institutional Development*

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Executive summary

HelpAge International, the University of Nairobi (Kenya) and the University of Warwick (United Kingdom) brought together 45 participants from Ethiopia, Kenya and Malawi as well as representatives from African Union (AU) and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN ECA) for a two-day workshop (4–5 June 2019) to discuss gender and ageing issues.

The African Union (AU) has produced a pioneering rights framework for older persons – the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa (2016). It has a regional Policy Framework and Plan of Action on Ageing (2002) and an Africa Common Position on Long Term Care (2017). National governments are developing laws that respect and protect the rights of older people and include their needs in policy frameworks. A growing number of countries are also providing social pensions.

Workshop participants confirmed that despite these positive developments, there is still much more to do to ensure that older people in Africa are able to live good lives now and in the future, and to ensure that those who care for them are not disadvantaged as a result when they themselves reach older age.

The workshop aimed to build support for and capacity among key stakeholders to deliver policies/practices based on a gender-inclusive, life-course perspective on ageing; and to identify knowledge gaps to support evidence-based legal and policy frameworks.

Recommendations

A. Research and teaching institutions should:

- Create a *repository/resource base* to promote the small but growing body of evidence on ageing in African contexts as well as the situation of older people and those who support and care for them. This would provide evidence for policy makers, educators, civil society advocates and older persons' associations.
- Develop *think tanks or centres of excellence* within higher education institutions to develop this resource base and to build capacity to identify and address knowledge gaps through contextually appropriate interdisciplinary research.
- Offer courses on ageing and the rights of older persons, on gendered/intersectional life-course approaches to ageing, and on the interactions between customary and state law, to build capacity among legal professionals, social workers, health service workers and other public officials.
- Undertake *research* to provide the evidence base for policy making. There is a need for *contextually specific studies* to understand:
  - o how 'age' is understood, and what this means for older people and those who care for them
  - o how older people understand their position in specific settings, from rural and peri-urban contexts, and within formal and informal settlements
  - o whether older people are able to exercise their rights, and how gender, ethnicity and other intersecting identities affect their lives. Do customary understandings of duties and responsibilities support (some or all) older people?
- Develop courses that *focus on the rights of older persons* in order to inform the development of national legislation, scrutinise laws from the perspective of older people, inform judicial practice, and provide evidence for advocacy for older persons' organisations.
- Adopt a life-course approach to reflect the intersecting inequalities that affect women and men of different social identities over their lifetime and in older age. It should also be comparative and take account of devolved government – with fieldwork in different counties in Kenya, different states in Ethiopia and different districts in Malawi – to identify different issues and enable learning from different approaches.

B. Civil society organisations should:

- Recognise population ageing and older people' rights as key issues and factor them into discussions and initiatives around human rights, poverty reduction, equality and social justice.
- Recognise older people's capacities as well as their vulnerabilities, and challenge ageist attitudes and language, and all discrimination based on age.
- Adopt inclusive approaches to programming with communities, across the development and humanitarian spectrum.
- Build capacity to ensure that the voices of all older people – women, men, older people with disabilities, and other marginalised groups – are heard and represented in policy making and more widely in society, including in the media.
- Ensure that older people of different genders, abilities and settings are represented in organisational governance structures.
- Identify strategic partners with whom to collaborative to deliver improvements in older persons' rights – for example, disability and gender campaigning groups interested in addressing the issues facing older people with disabilities or older women and men.
- Strengthen older persons' associations and ensure that they have the opportunity to share their experiences in key advocacy forums.
- Monitor and evaluate impact of services or programmes through participatory methods, and by including older persons' voices and using feedback to improve services.

C. African governments should:

- Ratify the AU Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa.
- Sensitise staff across multiple sectors to a life-course perspective on ageing and ensure that they have access to appropriate expertise on data, policy, equality and human rights when drafting policies on ageing.
- Ensure that social protection policies are designed to take into account the interests, needs and rights of older persons.
- Ensure that policies aimed at redressing inequities are adequately tailored to the context.
- Ensure that policies to protect and support those providing care for older persons are in place.
- Create inclusive and enjoyable shared urban spaces that encourage social activity and provide easier access to services and opportunities.
- Help older urban residents feel safe and secure by involving them in disaster preparedness planning, promoting better coordination between humanitarian actors and city authorities to ensure that older people's needs are met in times of emergency, and recognising the specific challenges facing older people who are displaced from their homes due to conflict.
- Develop gender-sensitive, non-contributory social pension systems.
- Build capacity in data collection expertise to enable policy making that responds to intersecting vulnerabilities.

D. African Union (and sub regional economic bodies?)

- Ensure sub-regional and regional sector specific laws, policies and strategies promote age inclusion and participation of older persons and their supporting organisations for effective advocacy and policy influencing.
- Ensure the 'inclusive development' focus of the African Agenda 2063 is realised and issues of older persons are effectively integrated in implemetation and reporting mechansisms.
- Facilitate collaborative ventures and side events with Academia and Civil Society organisation during key African Union's processes and meetings starting with the Special Technical Committee Meeting for Social Development, Labour and Emplyment in 2021.
- Development of partnerships with stakeholders to ensure quality and timely quality disaggregated data for evidence based policy and advocacy work.
- Coordinate and create awareness on ageing and older persons rights and supporting frameworks
- Work closely with the UN ECA to harmonised and coordinate ageing and older persons issues and framework in the region to reduce dublication of efforts and maximise on resources available (financial and technical).

E. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and UN Systems at all levels in the region

- Ensure with close collaboration with Africa Union to upscale ageing and older persons initiatives in AU Ministerial processes starting with Special Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment.
- Work closely with African Union and Civil Society Organisation to design and develop gender, ageing and older persons shadow reports to enhance the consolidation of knowledge and evidence to promote learning and advocacy and influence of change to laws, policies, strategies, standards and practice.
- Collaborate with AU and Civil Society organisations including network partners of HelpAge International to host side events relevant to promote issues of gender and ageing in key regional conferences, and development of relevant policies and programmes.
- UN ECA to design an African specific strategy and a road map for the development and adoption of a new international convention for the rights of older persons under the auspices of the UN Open Ended Working Group on Ageing (https://social.un.org/ageing-working-group/).
- Ensure SDGs processes, implementation and reporting is integrating ageing and older persons rights and entilements including profiled in the African Regional Forum for Sustainable Development Goals and High Level Political Forum.
- Work closely with the African Union to harmonise and coordinate ageing and older persons issues and framework in the region to reduce dublication of efforts and maximise on resources available (financial and technical).
- Ensure African Statistical Commission joins the Titchfield City Group on Ageing (https://www.un.org/development/desa/ageing/news/2018/03/title-statistics-commission-endorses-new-titchfield-city-group-on-ageing/) to ensure data disaggregation by age and ageing related information and to ensure the African countries are making progress in improving quality and timely disaggregated data.

F. Donors and research funders should:

- Support capacity building within civil society organisations to help them develop an intersectional life-course approach to ageing to ensure that ageing is included in advocacy across sectors.
- Support capacity building for older people's associations.
- Support capacity building within higher education institutions to develop centres of excellence/think tanks on ageing in Africa.
- Support contextually specific research to provide an evidence base for the development of legal and policy frameworks on ageing, from a life-course perspective.

G. The workshop organisers should:

- Develop research proposals building on the discussions and questions raised during the workshop.
- Create further opportunities for partnership between various stakeholders that attended.
- Explore the possibility of an online resource hub on gender and ageing for practitioners

Introduction

Although Africa is currently the 'youngest' continent in the world in terms of average age of the population, it is also ageing rapidly. Today, sub-Saharan Africa is home to an estimated 46 million older people – a figure projected to more than triple to 165 million by 2050. While longer life expectancy is to be celebrated, as it reflects remarkable achievements and growing prosperity, most countries have not adapted well to this new reality. Perceptions and narratives regarding older people are often discriminatory and ageist, while public policies often overlook older people's needs and undervalue their contributions.

Nonetheless, the African Union (AU) has produced a pioneering rights framework for older persons – the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa (2016). It has developed a Regional Policy Framework and Plan of Action on Ageing (2002) and an Africa Common Position on Long Term Care (2017). It has also developed a strong women's rights framework via the optional protocol on the Rights of Women, which pays particular attention to the position of older women, widows and women with disabilities. At national level, governments recognise the need to include older persons in their policy frameworks; a growing number are also providing social pensions.

On 4 and 5 June 2019, HelpAge International, the University of Nairobi (Kenya) and the University of Warwick (United Kingdom) brought together 45 participants from Ethiopia, Kenya and Malawi for a regional workshop to discuss gender and ageing issues. Among those attending were: national and regional policy makers with mandates relating to gender, ageing, social protection and care provision; academics; non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with expertise in gender, women's rights, older people's rights, and disability rights; and representatives of older persons' associations.

The workshop highlighted that despite these positive measures, there is still much more to be done to ensure that older people in Africa live healthy and fulfilling lives, and to ensure that those who care for them are not disadvantaged as a result when they themselves reach old age. Legal and policy frameworks are developing but often not implemented effectively. We do not know the impact such frameworks may have on relationships within communities and families.

The workshop aimed to establish whether there is sufficient policy and academic interest in conducting legal and public policy-oriented research into ageing, the position of older persons and the provision of care in Ethiopia, Kenya and Malawi to support co-design and co-ownership of future projects. Specifically, it aimed to:

- build support for and capacity among key stakeholders to deliver policies/practices based on a gender-inclusive, life-course perspective on ageing
- identify the gaps in knowledge necessary to support evidence-based legal and policy frameworks.

The format of the workshop

The format included plenary presentations, a roundtable discussion, and breakout sessions (in which people identified their top three takeaway priorities). Four working papers had been shared with participants prior to the workshop. Discussions were guided by the following four frameworks.

Framework 1: Gender-inclusive, life-course perspective on ageing

Gender equality throughout the life course is essential if all people are to flourish in older age. While policy makers and advocacy groups recognise that intersecting inequalities must be addressed – including those related to gender – inequalities associated with older age are often ignored. The working paper prepared on this framework (extracted from a longer policy briefing) argues that older women and men have a right to a better life now, but action needs to be taken during earlier life stages to ensure that future generations of older women and men can flourish when they reach older age. Gender relations must be transformed over the whole life course.

Framework 2: National and regional legal/policy frameworks and older persons

How do African regional conventions, constitutions and state legislative codes, and customary legal systems define an 'older person'? How do any provisions within these intersect with other provisions relating to discrimination (for example, due to sex, gender, disability, and cultural identity)? The working paper prepared on this framework analyses the opportunities present within African regional legislative frameworks on ageing, and how these can help fill gaps identified in the three national contexts represented at the workshop.

Framework 3: Caring and ageing under customary law in Africa

How are older people defined within customary law and how does this affect the provision of care, within their families and communities? Most older people in Africa live in rural areas, which often places them within customary settings where care is provided on the basis of clan and family in line with their respective customary laws. The working paper presented on this framework explores a range of questions. Do family structures guarantee care? To what extent do cultural norms exclude (some) older people from care? What is the impact of the disruption of traditional family care through migration and urbanisation?

Framework 4: Legal/policy frameworks based on a rights approach

Older people in both rural and urban settings continue to be marginalised and excluded from legal, policy and programmatic frameworks, which makes it difficult for them to access services they need and to participate in public policy processes. The working paper prepared for this framework highlights successes, challenges and gaps in the role played by older people in shaping such frameworks. It explores the gaps in knowledge and understanding in tackling discrimination and marginalisation based on age.

Post-workshop evaluation: The feedback was very positive, with 100 per cent of participants considering that the workshops had met its objectives; 44 per cent had their expectations exceeded, with 85 per cent having their expectations met. It was able to build a consensus, based on participants' knowledge and expertise, on the key issues and priorities ahead. Participants appreciated the opportunity to discuss and learn about the issues facing other countries in the region.

Key priorities that emerged from the workshop

Customary, local, national, regional and international legal frameworks

African countries are clearly making significant strides in improving legal protections for older people. Workshop participants discussed the protections afforded by various international instruments, including:

- the 1982 International Plan of Action on Ageing
- the UN Principles for Older Persons
- the UN Proclamation on Ageing 1992
- the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002
- the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights
- the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa.

There was also discussion of the various domestic legislation on older people in Ethiopia, Kenya and Malawi.

Ethiopia

Legal/policy context
- National Constitution
- Social Welfare Policy (2014)
- National Plan of Action on Older Persons (1998–2007)
- Growth and Transformation Plan II (2015/16–2019/20)
- National Development Framework (2015–2020)

Ethiopia is in the process of adopting an Older Persons' Act. Participants wanted to understand how traditional and modern care systems interact to ensure that older persons have autonomy and dignity, and the options for quality care provided by the state. Communal rules about restoring lost property due to manmade or environmental disasters may also affect older persons and participants wanted to explore this further. There was some frustration at the slow pace of implementation of policies and the lack of involvement of devolved government (states) in the drafting and implementation process. Participants wanted to explore how a rights-centred approach to law, policy making and implementation could ensure that Africa was leading the world on holistic approaches to ageing.

Kenya

Legal/policy context
- National Constitution (2010)
- Older Persons Policy (2018)
- National Policy for Older Persons and Ageing (revised 2014)

Participants from Kenya regretted the fact that the Social Assistance Act had not yet been operationalised. There are currently two separate bills on older persons at different stages of the policy making process.

The workshop discussed the role of domestic laws and policies, regional protocols and various components of international human rights law that cover the needs of older persons. Participants called for exploratory studies on the extent to which laws made by county assemblies reflect older persons' interests. It was felt that this would shed more light on county budgetary allocations for older people and reveal any complementary or overlapping efforts between national and county government interventions for older people.

Malawi

Legal/policy context
- National Constitution (2010)
- National Policy for Older Persons (2016)
- National Social Welfare Policy: Promoting Social Inclusion and Human Dignity 2018
- National Social Support Programme II (2018-2013)
- Growth and Development Strategy 111 (2017-2022)

Participants from Malawi highlighted the failure to involve the judiciary in the protection of older persons, and the functional and operational overlap between different laws and policies. They also recognised the importance of understanding not just the formal legal and policy framework but also *informal/customary laws* that affect the care and protection of older people.

Common themes across all three countries

In all three countries, customary law shapes how older people are protected and cared for, although it can undermine the care and wellbeing of some older persons. For example, older women often fare worse than older men, reflecting gender inequalities at each stage of the life course.

Participants noted the *lack of an intersectional approach* in existing policy and legislation, as well as substantial implementation challenges. They also noted the challenges involved in integrating ageing into national development agendas, including recognition of the issues by ministries of finance – reflected in limited budget allocations for policies supporting older persons.

Devolved government structures across all three countries (counties, states, districts) presented a challenge in that this requires collaboration at each level to deliver protections afforded to older persons. However, existing laws were not always clear on the specific contribution and role of each level of government.

Domestic laws across the three countries did not reflect the intersection of gender, ageing and disability. Accordingly, older people with disabilities were marginalised even within laws and policies designed to support older persons. Similarly, laws and policies did not take sufficient account of differences based on gender.

Issues raised at the workshop included the following:

- *Translating the AU protocol on the Rights of Older Persons* into local languages would facilitate dissemination and lead to increased public understanding of the issues facing older persons.
- Participants strongly supported the *ratification of the AU Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa*. Some suggested that a United Nations (UN) Convention on the rights of older persons could be part of Africa's forward-planning legacy if governments from the continent led in its development.
- There is a *lack of awareness* on existing policies and programmes by the agencies charged with implementation, such as *state officials*. This has compromised intra-government partnerships in the implementation of joined up/intersectional policy making.
- Failure to involve the *judiciary and other legal professionals* and provide them with training on the rights and entitlements of older persons has limited the development of a rights-based framework.
- There is a strong desire to *learn more about how customary and formal laws combine* to promote the protection of older persons.
- Participants from Kenya and Malawi observed that *colonial laws on witchcraft* in their respective countries had validated the victimisation of older persons as witches, which was a factor contributing not just to dispossession of assets but also in some cases physical and psychological torture of older people, even death. This issue must be urgently addressed.
- It is vital to *understand the role of the family* in caring for and protecting older people, within both customary and state law. For example, is the present framework of duties and responsibilities appropriate?

What are the priorities for further research?

- What are the economic costs of implementing the rights of older persons in line with regional and national policies? *More research* needs to be done to obtain data that would convince governments on the economic consequences of ignoring older persons.
- How do existing legal frameworks support older persons or discriminate against them?
- How are budget commitments for older persons developed, agreed and implemented? Civil society organisations (CSOs) could undertake national budget analysis to generate relevant information to guide the process (similar to budget audits for gender equality).

Voice and agency in decision making for older persons

Participants from all three countries wanted to ensure that older persons were present in discussions on policy and programmes that affect their lives. They also wanted to see older persons represented within CSOs (as board members, staff and volunteers). Their concerns and aspirations must be fully integrated into policy development and programme implementation in line with global, regional and domestic obligations. Accordingly, those with responsibilities for agendas relating to older persons at national and international level should seek to involve older persons in all relevant processes. The workshop discussed the strategies and obstacles to achieving this.

Participants from Ethiopia were hopeful that CSOs and older persons associations could be further strengthened to protect social spaces for older persons, and provide training and capacity building to empower older people to advocate for their rights. They suggested that legal rights centres could improve older people's understanding of the issues affecting them and how to claim their entitlements. Governance structures of charities and rights organisations should also be improved to ensure that older people are represented in decision making.

Issues raised at the workshop included the following:

- *Human rights organisations and other CSOs* supporting women's rights and gender justice, and those campaigning on disability issues, should be encouraged to address the issues facing *older persons* within their areas of interest, and to undertake advocacy to augment the activities of older persons' organisations.
- *Board members of various human rights organisations and government agencies* should receive training to understand the need to include older persons' voices. Older persons should also be involved in evaluating programme impacts to ensure that successes or failures relating to older people are considered.
- *Older persons* (whether associations or influential individuals) should be facilitated to *engage government directly* in advancing their rights so that measures to support older people are mainstreamed across all sectors of government.
- *Older persons' organisations* must become much more visible at the grassroots level to ensure that their voices are included in the development of policies and programmes and in monitoring. Except for those working directly with HelpAge, the *nature and number of such organisations is largely unknown*.

What are the priorities for further research?

- What are the institutions that can access and augment older people's voices?
- What are the perceptions of communities and policy makers when it comes to securing older people's participation in consultations?
- Is the relationship between disability, age and gender understood? Are the concerns of women and men with disabilities voiced?
- What resources are needed to enable older people to participate meaningfully?
- What is the most appropriate mechanism for the engagement of older persons and their organisations? What is the most appropriate/feasible level of engagement (regional; state/county/district/locality?)

A life-course perspective on ageing

From the moment we are born, we experience different events and make different choices. We also face the consequences of policies and systems, and of intersecting forms of discrimination that influence our lives and create inequalities. As we grow older, the impact of each of these different experiences accumulates.

Policies and programmes – and the way they are implemented – affect each of us across the entire life course and influence our wellbeing in older age. When designing a given policy, it is important to look forward and consider its impact on people in older age. For example, early marriage can affect women's health and wellbeing throughout their lives but can have particular impacts in older age. To achieve the aspirations of the AU's Agenda 2063 ('the Africa We Want') and Vision 2030 ('Leave No One Behind'), policy makers must adopt an intersectional life-course perspective on ageing.

> Today's 19-year-old Africans will become 63-year-old Africans. If policies designed to achieve 'the Africa We Want' and to 'Leave No One Behind' can counter the disadvantages and inequalities that people face across their life course, which create and sustain inequalities, then hopefully those 63-year-olds will flourish to become 83-year-olds or 93-year-olds.

Issues raised at the workshop included the following:

- To what extent can *property ownership in older age,* including security of tenure, help anchor the wellbeing of people in older age?
- The *gendered dimensions of land ownership* give cause for concern. There is a need for *more research* on the links between age, gender and property ownership (or lack thereof).
- How does *masculinity affect ageing?* There is a need to test whether assumptions about to the position of older men are valid. For example, an economically or socially disadvantaged older man may not be regarded as an elder or may be excluded from distribution of resources.
- Government initiatives tend to focus on *pensions* and other measures that target people who have been in formal sector employment. In African settings, however, many older people (particularly in rural areas) will not have worked in the formal sector, so tend not to benefit from state social security schemes. Participants welcomed the development of *social pensions* but regretted the *lack of evidence and information on older people's livelihood strategies*.
- There is a need to develop a *gendered/intersectional life-course approach* to ageing, to inform policy and planning not just for today's older people but for tomorrow's.
- Policy must recognise the *impact of care responsibilities on older women and men who undertake this role* or who are obliged to take on new care responsibilities for grandchildren in older age.

Country-specific issues

Ethiopia

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has requested that the impacts of policies on older persons be reported systematically across departments and ministries. While its request is yet to be operationalised, such reporting could inform decision making across many policy areas. *This is an important first step!* When accompanied by training to increase awareness among government ministries of how to design policies in ways that address intersecting vulnerabilities, and alongside efforts to include the voices of older persons in policy design and implementation, systematic reporting would significantly enhance the chances of policies improving older persons' wellbeing. It could also contribute to more informed policy making by recognising how liabilities and assets have been accumulated (or not) over time.

Kenya

The Kenyan participants were much more concerned with the scope of government intervention vis-à-vis the individual and the market, particularly the implications of the Big 4 Agenda (government development blueprint) on the life-course approach. Other concerns about obstacles to a life-course

approach include the absence of old age savings plans for those outside the formal sector, and the failure by the market to develop saving plans for low-income non-formal sector employees. Participants suggested more training for government officials and those in the informal sector, as well as a strong partnership between the state, the market and citizens in developing a life-course programme, especially on savings for retirement by many of today's youths who are not in formal employment.

Malawi

People in urban areas tend to be younger and have more resources, so they are more likely to be aware of their entitlements. Older people in rural areas are more rooted in traditional community values and beliefs. Younger people, particularly those from better-off households, are likely to have a better life in older age. However, older people provide as much support as they can to younger people in their families and communities. This transfer of assets enables younger people to avoid lifelong poverty.

The Malawi government has commissioned two studies that impact policies targeting older women and men: *Social Protection in Malawi: Assessment Based National Dialogue*; and *Realising Income Security in Old Age: A Study into the Feasibility of a Universal Old Age Pension in Malawi*. It is also exploring a universal pension to facilitate social justice to vulnerable population groups such as women, to mitigate the potential impact of accumulated disadvantage throughout the life course in older age.

What are the priorities for further research?

- How do different contexts (rural–urban, occupations–livelihoods) and different social identities (male–female) affect people's experiences throughout the life course and compound inequalities in older age?
- How do public policies alter or improve these life courses? What is needed to provide evidence of effectiveness?
- What is the nexus between institutional and family care?
- Are older women and men treated as full citizens and their rights respected? Are older women and men abused? In what ways? Is this different for women than for men? Is violence against older women 'normalised' in society?
- How do customary laws affect ageing and care provision? How do these interact (positively or negatively) with national legislation to provide long-term support and assistance?

The need for evidence-based policy making and responses – why collecting data on intersecting issues is vital

Good-quality evidence and data can enable governments to better understand citizens' needs and measure progress in the implementation of strategies and policies. It can also help citizens lobby governments to make change and hold them to account.

Africa's Agenda 2063 and the UN's Vision 2030 both recognise the importance of gender equality and human rights more generally. The SDGs explicitly include older people while Agenda 2063 recognises the importance of Africa's cultural identity, norms and values. Both strive to reduce or eliminate poverty and achieve prosperity for all. Achieving those aims will require better quality data, capable of capturing intersectional inequalities and disaggregating by age (in cohorts of 10 or ideally 5 years).

Issues raised at the workshop included the following:

- *People of all ages should be included in data collection and analysis,* including older people in multidimensional poverty measurement, and disaggregating a household-level multidimensional poverty index by age.

- There is a *growing body of literature on the position of older people* in Africa (whether on livelihoods, social pensions or cash transfers) but it needs to be disseminated more widely to inform education, training and policy.
- There are still *many knowledge gaps,* particularly on: the position of older people in different rural settings, in different peri-urban and urban localities (including informal settlements) and those who live on the streets; and the position of older women and men with disabilities acquired at different life stages.
- *Citizen-generated data* also has a key role to play as evidence for use in advocacy work. Policy makers need to hear the *choices that older people want* to make about their lives.

Country-specific issues

Ethiopia

Participants expressed a need for research that collects data on the impact of ageing disaggregated by other vulnerability factors such as poverty, homelessness, gender, disability, sexuality, gender identity, ethnicity, nationality or other factors. They also talked about standardising data collection when monitoring and evaluating the impact of policies on vulnerable groups. In this way, data collection can help inform policy making that is sensitive to intersecting vulnerabilities. However, participants also spoke of the need for capacity building in relation to appropriate data collection.

Participants were interested to find out what research is being undertaken to understand the obstacles faced by older peoples socially, politically, economically and/or culturally excluded on account of their age but potentially also geography, poverty, gender, indigenous or minority status and disability, national or social origin, birth or other status.

Kenya

There is no comprehensive data collected on older persons' situation in Kenya. Although the National Gender and Equality Commission and the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights have conducted studies, that research was done in response to specific events (such as elections) and based on a small regional sample. There is thus a need for more comprehensive policy-based research to inform legal and policy initiatives. Lack of disaggregated data, including on intersecting identities, has contributed to the invisibility of older persons within the current limited data pool on social welfare.

Malawi

There is very limited data on the effectiveness of current government programmes on care for older people. National surveys collect data on older persons but are ad hoc.

What are the priorities for further research?

- What research tools are currently used at country level to collect information on older people (eg, the Multi Indicator Survey on Ageing tool in Malawi).
- Research studies should take account of local contexts, including geographical differences, and intersecting inequalities (addressing specific vulnerabilities such as accusations of witchcraft linked to gender and age).
- Research studies on informing evidence-based policies for ageing and health. This would be aligned to the Agenda 2030 and AU Agenda 2063.

Who cares? Family and social care

Those who do (unpaid) work looking after family members (whether children, relatives with disabilities or older people) are often disadvantaged in older age because they have not had an equal opportunity to accumulate assets, income and savings, either from paid labour or entrepreneurial activities. Recent figures from the International Labour Organization (ILO) show that globally, women perform more than three-quarters of the total hours of unpaid care work – more than three times as much as men.[1] Women are more likely than men to live in poverty at all ages but in older age the difference can be more significant. Women are more likely to be widowed, to live alone and to face discrimination. Many older men are also involved in caring for other older people and children in their families. Their role should be better recognised and supported.

In many contexts, as older people withdraw from the labour force, families take responsibility for their financial and material support. However, this support can be irregular, limited and exclude many older people. A 2017 HelpAge International study finds that, while a significant amount of older people receive support from their children, the level of support is often inadequate to ensure income security. Only a few older people can rely on a pension provided by the state or their employer. Some states provide cash transfers and social pensions (including those represented at the workshop). While these provide welcome support, they are not sufficient to sustain an older person.

Participants discussed how care is provided in families and what was expected of families by state laws and policies. They identified the need for greater understanding of the pressures on families but also the need to determine what older people want. They discussed the provision of social care and the role of care within institutional settings.

Issues raised at the workshop included the following:
- *Women, who are usually the ones that do household and care work, are particularly vulnerable.* Public policies need to address the root causes of gender inequalities, particularly in education, employment and social protection (including care). *Caring across the life course* – for the young *and* for older people – *disadvantages the carer* when they are older. Adopting a life-course approach to care – providing support for caring at all stages in line with SDG 5, target 4 – will tackle the accumulation of disadvantage.
- Participants noted the need to recognise the *impact on older women and men who are carers* or who are obliged to take on new care responsibilities for grandchildren in older age.
- Workshop participants spoke passionately about the *lack of geriatric healthcare specialists* across the continent.
- There is a need to develop systems of social care that provide older persons with autonomy and dignity, and provide older people with choices of good-quality care, whether provided by the community or state.

Country-specific issues

Ethiopia
Ethiopia is developing a social protection fund that includes community-based health insurance for older persons and other forms of protection. The Constitution directs families to care for children and older persons. Participants were interested to identify best practice in caring and to see what quality institutional care looked like.

Kenya
Participants recommended that the rights of older persons be embedded into the country's Big 4 Agenda, with the government seeking to make significant achievements by 2022. (The Agenda seeks to operationalise access to universal healthcare, affordable housing and food security, and to increase the country's manufacturing.) There appears to be an emerging trend in which older women are abandoning older men in the villages and moving to the cities to care for their grandchildren. Due to

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traditional gender roles, these older men find it difficult to adjust to these new realities, which compel them to rely on paid care or other family members.

Malawi

In Malawi, institutional care has been firmly rejected (largely owing to weak monitoring and regulation of care providers). The Constitution actually directs families to care for children and older persons. Older women who live with their adult children tend to have better mental and physical health compared to those living only with grandchildren. Further, older men who live in larger households or in households with a higher proportion of females have better physical health.

Malawi's National Social Support Programme is based on three pillars: (1) consumption support (through timely, predictable and adequate cash and/or in-kind transfers to poor and vulnerable people throughout the life cycle); (2) promoting resilient livelihoods (through tailored packages based on individual, household, and community needs via poverty graduation pathways and inter-programme linkages); and (3) a shock-sensitive social protection system that meets seasonal needs, prepares for and responds to unpredictable shocks, and aids recovery and the return to regular programming.

Urbanisation and migration

Urbanisation and population ageing are occurring rapidly in African countries. Research shows that for older people, cities present physical, social and economic barriers that prevent them realising their right to live in dignity and safety, enjoying their surroundings. The challenges facing urban populations

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What are the priorities for further research?

- The value of care by and for older persons – is this seen as a 'burden' or 'duty'?
- Do older people want to always rely on their families for support? Do some prefer to make their own decisions about how to live in older age? What choices do they have?
- What is the role of more social forms of care, including that provided in institutional settings or through home care or day care centres?
- How is quality ensured in the provision of these forms of social care?
- What regulation is necessary? What training do those providing care undertake?

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have been rising up the international development agenda, with Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, the World Humanitarian Summit and the New Urban Agenda (as part of the Habitat III process) united in calling for inclusive urbanisation.

Issues raised at the workshop included the following:

- *Rapid urbanisation* had led to towns expanding into areas previously considered rural. This has not only displaced older people as they are forced to surrender their ancestral land and seek land elsewhere but has also disrupted traditional family structures that older people rely on for care.
- Many young people have moved to urban areas, leaving *older persons to care both for each other as well as for grandchildren* who are sometimes left behind when their parents migrate.
- Migration to cities and towns has led to a *sizeable number of older persons in urban areas*. Some have spent their entire working life in the towns and cities but may lack proper social networks to return to rural areas if they wished to. Urban infrastructure, including transport, is often unresponsive to older people's needs, leading to isolation.

Country-specific issues

Ethiopia

A recent study found that almost 10 per cent of homeless people in Addis Ababa were older people. Policies designed to re-connect homeless older people with their family – often living in rural areas – failed. Neither rural areas nor the city are well equipped when it comes to protecting and promoting

older persons' rights. Participants were interested in further research on best practices in protecting the rights of older persons amid rapid urbanisation.

Kenya

Intersecting identities combine to leave certain groups of older people very vulnerable in the urban environment. Effective intersectional policy making requires accessible public services, including transportation. Some participants observed a trend of older women moving to the cities or overseas to live with their daughters-in- law/ sons-in-law ostensibly to care for their grandchildren (and help offset househelp bills) in line with customary law. Older men are therefore left vulnerable and isolated in rural villages. At the same time, many older people with terminal illnesses migrate to urban areas in search of better public/private medical services.

Malawi

Despite the fact that many older people had been left alone in rural areas, the continued resistance to institutional care on the basis of culture needs to be re-examined. Participants suggested conducting further studies on how to work with communities to overcome barriers to institutional care and find ways of tailoring the concept to local realities.

What are the priorities for further research?

- There is a need for *more evidence* to understand the *position of older people in different urban contexts,* including the forms of care and support they can call upon.
- How do urban areas increase or reduce vulnerabilities for older people who have intersecting vulnerabilities, including gender and disability?
- How can technological innovation support older people to live better lives?

Conclusions and recommendations

We prepared a mind map showing how the workshop discussions developed over the course of the two days (Figure 1). Key themes that emerged included: (1) the importance of understanding customary practices as well as formal law and policies; (2) the need to adopt a life-course perspective within cross-cutting and intersectional policy development; (3) support for ratification of the African Older Persons Protocol was seen as essential; and (4) the need for more evidence-based policy making, which requires more research and disaggregated data collection.

Figure 1: Mind map of the two-day workshop on Gender and Ageing in African Contexts

Recommendations

Research and teaching institutions should:

- Create a *repository/resource base* for the small but growing body of source material on ageing in African contexts, and the situation and rights of older people and those who provide support and care for them. This will provide valuable information for policy makers, educators, civil society advocates and older persons' organisations.
- Develop *think tanks or centres of excellence* within higher education institutions to develop this resource base, and build capacity to identify knowledge gaps and develop contextually appropriate interdisciplinary research to fill those gaps. This expertise will enable the development of undergraduate/postgraduate modules and training.
- Offer courses in higher education institutions on ageing and the rights of older people; on gendered/intersectional life-course approaches to ageing; and on the interactions between customary and state law. This will strengthen capacity among legal professionals, social workers, health service workers and other public officials.
- Undertake *research,* particularly in the areas discussed at the workshop, to provide evidence for policy making. There is a need for *contextually specific studies* to understand:
  - how 'age' is understood and what this means for older people and those who care for them
  - how older people understand their position in specific settings – including rural and peri-urban contexts, and within informal settlements in urban areas
  - the extent to which older people are able to exercise their rights. How do gender, ethnicity and other intersecting identities affect older people's lives and their position in their community? Do customary understandings of duties and responsibilities support (some or all) older people? How is family-based care understood? Who is expected to provide what form of care? How is family support affected by migration (of older people or their relatives)? How is family support affected by state support programmes? How is 'institutionalised' care provided and what regulation is in place to ensure quality?
- Develop courses that *focus on the rights of older persons* to: inform the development of national legislation; to scrutinise laws from the perspective of older people; to inform judicial practice; and to provide the knowledge that older persons' organisations and those working on disability and gender need to advocate for the rights of older people.

> Research should be based on a life-course approach to reflect the intersecting inequalities that affect women and men from different backgrounds over their lifetime and affect their lives in older age. It should be comparative in nature and take account of devolved government, with fieldwork in different counties (Kenya), states (Ethiopia) and districts (Malawi) to identify different issues and enable learning across contexts. Comparative studies within and across countries would enable good practice to be shared and more effective policy development and implementation.
>
> Filling evidence gaps with contextual research and disaggregated data collection will provide an unprecedented opportunity to include all people who are ageing in national and international development agendas.

Civil society organisations should:

- Recognise population ageing and older people's rights as key issues and factor them into discussions and initiatives on human rights, poverty reduction, equality and social justice.
- Recognise older people's capacities as well as their vulnerabilities, and challenge ageist attitudes and languages, and all discrimination based on age.
- Adopt inclusive approaches to programming with communities, across development and humanitarian interventions.
- Build capacity to ensure that the voices of all older people – women, men, older people with disabilities, and other marginalised groups – are heard and represented in policy making and more widely in society, including in the media.
- Ensure older people of different genders, abilities and from different settings are represented in organisational governance structures.

- Identify strategic partners with whom to collaborative to deliver improvements in older persons' rights – for example, disability and gender campaigning groups interested in addressing the issues facing older people with disabilities or older women and men respectively.
- Strengthen older persons' associations and ensure that they have the opportunity to share their experiences in key advocacy forums.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of programmes or services using participatory methods and include older persons' voices in feedback to drive improvements in service provision.

African governments should:
- Ratify the AU Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa.
- Sensitise staff across multiple sectors to a life0course perspective on ageing and ensure that they have access to appropriate expertise on data, policy, equality and human rights when drafting policies on ageing.
- Ensure that social protection policies are designed to take into account the interests, needs and rights of older persons.
- Ensure that policies aimed at redressing inequities are adequately tailored to the context (for example, older persons living in rural areas are likely to have very different needs to older persons in urban areas).
- Ensure that policies to protect and support those providing care for older people are in place.
- Create inclusive and enjoyable shared urban spaces that encourage social activity and provide easier access to services and opportunities.
- Help older urban residents feel safe and secure by involving them in disaster preparedness planning, promoting better coordination between humanitarian actors and city authorities to ensure that older people's specific needs are met in times of emergency, and recognising the specific challenges facing older people who have been displaced from their homes.
- Develop gender-sensitive, non-contributory social pension systems.
- Build capacity in data collection expertise to enable policy making that responds to intersecting vulnerabilities.

African Union (and sub regional economic bodies?)
- Ensure sub-regional and regional sector specific laws, policies and strategies promote age inclusion and participation of older persons and their supporting organisations for effective advocacy and policy influencing.
- Ensure the 'inclusive development' focus of the African Agenda 2063 is realised and issues of older persons are effectively integrated in implemetation and reporting mechanisms.
- Facilitate collaborative ventures and side events with Academia and Civil Society organisation during key African Union's processes and meetings starting with the Special Technical Committee Meeting for Social Development, Labour and Emplyment in 2021.
- Development of partnerships with stakeholders to ensure quality and timely quality disaggregated data for evidence based policy and advocacy work.
- Coordinate and create awareness on ageing and older persons rights and supporting frameworks
- Work closely with the UN ECA to harmonised and coordinate ageing and older persons issues and framework in the region to reduce dublication of efforts and maximise on resources available (financial and technical).

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and UN Systems at all levels in the region

- Ensure with close collaboration with Africa Union to upscale ageing and older persons initiatives in AU Ministerial processes starting with Special Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment.
- Work closely with African Union and Civil Society Organisation to design and develop gender, ageing and older persons shadow reports to enhance the consolidation of knowledge and evidence to promote learning and advocacy and influence of change to laws, policies, strategies, standards and practice.
- Collaborate with AU and Civil Society organisations including network partners of HelpAge International to host side events relevant to promote issues of gender and ageing in key regional conferences, and development of relevant policies and programmes.
- UN ECA to design an African specific strategy and a road map for the development and adoption of a new international convention for the rights of older persons under the auspices of the UN Open Ended Working Group on Ageing (https://social.un.org/ageing-working-group/).
- Ensure SDGs processes, implementation and reporting is integrating ageing and older persons rights and entilements including profiled in the African Regional Forum for Sustainable Development Goals and High Level Political Forum.
- Work closely with the African Union to harmonise and coordinate ageing and older persons issues and framework in the region to reduce dublication of efforts and maximise on resources available (financial and technical).
- Ensure African Statistical Commission joins the Titchfield City Group on Ageing (https://www.un.org/development/desa/ageing/news/2018/03/title-statistics-commission-endorses-new-titchfield-city-group-on-ageing/) to ensure data disaggregation by age and ageing related information and to ensure the African countries are making progress in improving quality and timely disaggregated data.

Donors and research funders should:

- Support capacity building within CSOs to help them develop an intersectional life-course approach to ageing to ensure that ageing is included in advocacy work across sectors .
- Support capacity building for older people's associations.
- Support capacity building within higher education institutions to develop centres of excellence or think tanks on ageing in Africa.
- Support contextually specific research to provide an evidence base for the development of legal and policy frameworks on ageing in African contexts, including from a life-course perspective.

The workshop organisers should:

- Develop research proposals building on the discussions and questions raised during the workshop.
- Create further opportunities for partnership between the various stakeholders that attended.
- Explore the possibility of an online resource hub on gender and ageing for practitioners.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Developing a gender-inclusive, life-course perspective on ageing in African contexts

(*Transforming gender relations in an ageing world: a policy discussion paper,* Warwick Law School/HelpAge International, July 2018 extracts)

Gender equality throughout the life course is essential if all people are to flourish in older age. Ageing is becoming a key issue for international policy makers and decision makers. Barriers to achieving a good older age for all include: poor understanding of the issues; lack of wider research on the intersection between ageing and gender (despite the 'feminisation of ageing'[2]); and the tendency for development practitioners and policies to focus on younger age groups.

While policy makers and advocacy groups recognise that we must address intersecting inequalities, including those related to gender, inequalities associated with older age are often ignored. This policy brief starts from the perspective of those experiencing older age – older people have a right to better lives now – but reaches back into earlier life stages to ensure that future generations can flourish in older age. Gender relations must be transformed over the whole life course. This policy brief addresses issues of gender relations in older age but highlights the importance of a gendered understanding of ageing for development and humanitarian policy and advocacy.

Key messages
These key messages are based on global evidence combined with HelpAge International's knowledge and practice, generated by working with, through and for its network partners.

- Flourishing in older age depends on transforming gender relations over a lifetime.
- Older people have rights; they have a right to be heard: their voices are valuable.[3]
- Ageing intensifies the disadvantages faced by many women and can disempower men.
- Gender relations in older age will be transformed by addressing the accumulation of economic inequalities and culturally devalued identities such as race, class, ethnicity, gender identity, sexuality and disability.
- Gender informs all the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Overcoming ageism is central to the implementation of the Agenda 2030 gender outcomes.
- Research on the interaction between gender and ageing is needed to address the inadequate understanding of intersecting inequalities in older age.

Supporting framework
In this section we introduce an analytical framework for policy and advocacy that adapts an *intersecting inequalities* approach to development policy[4] by adding a *life-course* perspective.[5] Capabilities in older age are determined by myriad intersecting inequalities – the result of economic processes and those associated with political, cultural, social and cultural practices, including those linked to the effects of accumulating assets and liabilities over a lifetime. We use the lens of older age

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2 Nearly a quarter of the world's women are over the age of 50. Women live longer than men: there are approximately 80 men aged 60 and over for every 100 women. By 2025, the number of older women in Africa is expected to soar from 13 million to 46 million. *'If not addressed, the feminization of aging has the potential to become one of the biggest challenges to gender equality of this century.'* See Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN Women, 'Challenges Facing Older Women', 28 February 2017, https://wunrn.com/2017/02/challenges-facing-older-women-the-feminization-of-aging/ (2 July 2019)

3 HelpAge International, *Entitled to the same rights: what older women say about their rights to non-discrimination and equality, and to freedom from violence, abuse and neglect,* London, HelpAge International, 2017, http://www.helpage.org/newsroom/latest-news/older-women-speak-out-about-their-rights-in-new-helpage-international-report/ (2 July 2019)

4 Arauco V.P. et al, *Strengthening social justice to address intersecting inequalities post-2015,* London, Overseas Development Institute, 2014, https://www.odi.org/publications/8909-strengthening-social-justice-address-intersecting-inequalities; Kabeer N, *Can the MDGs provide a pathway to social justice? The challenge of intersecting inequalities,* Brighton, Institute of Development Studies, 2010, https://www.ids.ac.uk/publication/can-the-mdgs-provide-a-pathway-to-social-justice-the-challenges-of-intersecting-inequalities; Kabeer N and Santos R, 'Intersecting inequalities and the Sustainable Development Goals: insights from Brazil', *LSE International Inequalities Institute Working Paper,* London, London School of Economics and Political Science, 2017, http://www.lse.ac.uk/International-Inequalities/Assets/Documents/Working-Papers/III-Working-Paper-14-Intersecting-inequalities-and-the-Sustainable-Development-Goals-insights-from-Brazil-Naila-Kabeer-and-Ricardo-Santos.pdf (2 July 2019)

5 World Health Organization (WHO) and International Longevity Centre, *A life course approach to health*, Geneva, WHO, 2000, http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/lifecourse/alc_lifecourse_training_en.pdf (2 July 2019); See also *Special Edition of Journal of Population Ageing* Volume 9, Issue 1-2, June 2016 'Life course influences on inequalities in later life: comparative perspectives'; HelpAge International, 'What is the lifecourse approach to ageing?' http://www.helpage.org/what-we-do/life-course-approach-to-ageing/ (2 July 2019)

to *reflect back* on the effects of the earlier life stages, which largely determine an older person's status. We also highlight the effects of ageism,[6] which is rife and can add to already accumulated disadvantages or undermine the advantages of those who have managed to accumulate assets.

Throughout our lives we make decisions about how we want to live but some of us have more choice than others. Despite our efforts over a lifetime, some of us arrive at older age with very few economic, social and cultural assets to call upon. This may be because we have experienced war, conflict or devastating natural disaster; because we were born into a poor family or into a community that is discriminated against (for instance, because of caste, religion or ethnicity); or because we are born with or acquire an impairment. Gender-based inequalities can start from before we are born and continue over a lifetime. Our lives do not necessarily proceed in neat stages but rather in a fluid and dynamic manner. For example, impairments can interact with social, cultural and economic determinants and environmental aspects across the life course, resulting in differing outcomes for men and women.[7] The commonly held assumption that older people are genderless or asexual often prevents gender being considered as an issue in older age. To combat this ageist notion, it is vital to remember that the effects of gendered processes do not stop when people reach older age.

Figure A1 is a dynamic representation of older age as the accumulation of events and processes over a lifetime. Five life stages are highlighted (in blue) before older age is secured. All involve social relations (highlighted in green) which influence the accumulation of social assets, shaping older lives. The outer, productive circle (highlighted in purple) includes social reproduction a well as economic productivity. Both forms may extend into childhood and shape liabilities in older age.

The economic, social and cultural assets and liabilities of every older person are accumulated over time, from pre-birth through what are regarded as reproductive and productive ages.[8]

Figure A1: Accumulating assets/ liabilities over the life course

Gender sensitisation seeks to enable older women and men equally to 'be and do what they have reason to value'.[9] It is a lens primarily applied to projects and interventions focused on older people themselves. It seeks to *mitigate* the accumulated adverse effects on women and men of a gendered life course. **Being sensitive to gender issues in older age does not address the gender-based power relations that operate throughout the life course.**

A **gender-sensitive lens** must be complemented by a **gender transformative** approach to *all stages of the life course.* Without diluting the primary remit of age-focused organisations, advocacy must also influence international and national policy development and global frameworks by adding a gendered ageing lens to interventions that focus on earlier life-course stages.[10] **Gender-sensitive** and **gender-transformative** approaches overlap and intersect; a gender-transformative life-course
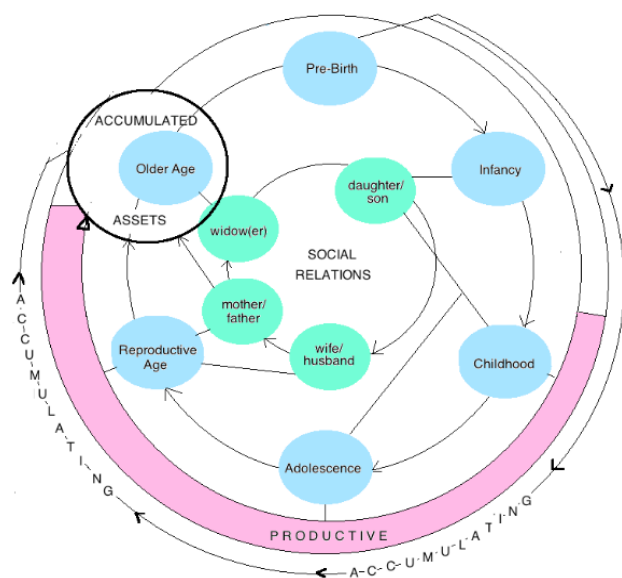
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6 'Ageism' is stereotyping and discrimination against individuals or groups on the basis of their age; it can take many forms, including prejudicial attitudes, discriminatory practices, or institutional policies and practices that perpetuate stereotypical beliefs (WHO, *World report on ageing and health,* Geneva, WHO, 2015); see also WHO, 'Voices of older adults on ageism': https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7sQTgLgFVaE (2 July 2019)

7 We recognise that gendered processes are far more complex beyond the binary of men and women, often differentially affecting lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, questioning and intersex (LGBTQI) communities. As noted in this brief, gender identities and sexualities can be culturally devalued and discriminated against, contributing to the production of intersecting inequalities. There is an insufficient research base at present on ageing, gender identities and sexualities. More research in this area is urgently needed to inform advocacy and programming.

8 Production relates to undertaking paid work. Reproduction here is understood as biological process rather than 'social reproduction', which includes the provision of the sexual, emotional and affective services required to maintain family/intimate relationships, unpaid production in the home and reproduction of culture, which stabilises social relations. See Hoskyns C and Rai SM, 'Recasting the international political economy: counting women's unpaid work', *New Political Economy* 12(3), 2007, pp. 297–317)

9 World Health Organization, *World health report on ageing and health,* Geneva, WHO, 2015

10 For example, advocacy for changing gender norms and redistributing caring responsibilities between men and women in younger generations will positively impact the health and wealth of women as they age, because they will have more opportunities to acquire economic assets over their lifetime on a more equal basis with their male peers. Men will also benefit as they get older from having been more involved in social reproduction and the social assets and bonds that such engagement produces.

approach exposes the wider and enduring economic and social impact of such practices, and adds an age-inclusive perspective to gender-based advocacy.

Sustainable Development Goals: Using SDG 5 to produce a gender-transformative agenda for ageing

The global phenomenon of longevity is a triumph of humanity – but it is also a global challenge for the SDGs. These goals connect directly to a vision of a world in which all older people can lead dignified, healthy and secure lives. While gender equality is an explicit goal, ageing is addressed within individual goals. Age-focused organisations are now recognising the intersection between gender and ageing, but there is much to be done to engage the wider policy community on this.

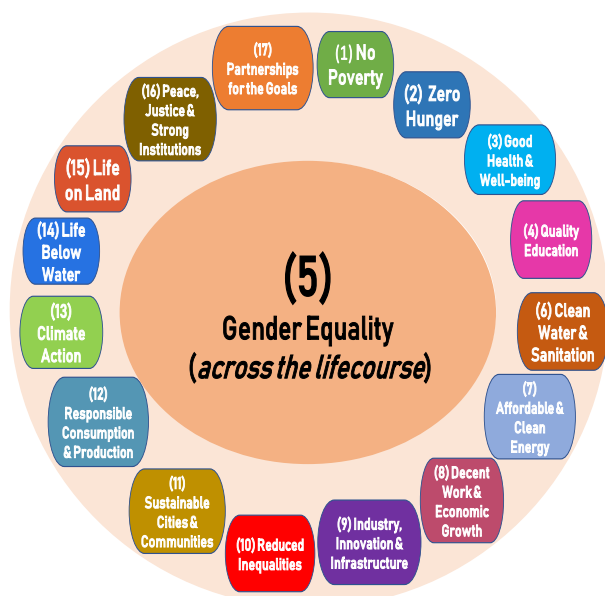**Figure A2: A gendered life-course approach to implementing the SDGs**

Figure A2: To be gender-transformative across the entire life course, the equality goal must address the intersection between ageing and gender within and across all goals

The SDGs reflect a growing understanding of the need to tackle intersecting inequalities. The processes that create or reinforce gender inequalities are increasingly recognised. Many of the individual goals are also expressed explicitly or implicitly in age-inclusive terminology.[11] For example:

- **5.1 Target** End all forms of discrimination against *all* women and girls everywhere
- **5.C Target** Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of *all* women and girls at all levels

While the framing of these targets and indicators emphasises 'all' women and girls, implicitly including older women, a coherent life-course perspective is generally lacking. Interventions overwhelmingly focus on the early and biologically reproductive stages of girls' and women's lives and on the economically productive stages for men (and, increasingly, women). The impact of the accumulated effects of, and interaction between, socially reproductive responsibilities and productive activities on older people are not as well recognised. The later stages of the life course are not addressed, despite the impact of age-specific impairments and conditions, and discrimination (ageism), at that stage.

Gender advocacy, rooted in SDG 5 but applied to all goals, needs to develop a life-course perspective to ensure that human development discourse and practice is age-inclusive and gender-transformative. *The SDGs will only be effective if data is collected and disaggregated across the life course, ideally in*

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11 HelpAge International, *Agenda 2030: The Sustainable Development Goals and global ageing,* Discussion Paper, London, HelpAge International, 2017, http://ageafrica.net/wp-content/uploads/HelpAge-Agenda2030-LowRes.pdf (2 July 2019)

5-year (but at least 10-year) age cohorts to provide the basis for gender-transformative, age-inclusive research and project design.

More research and policy interventions are needed, both to understand and tackle the accumulated effects of gendered processes in later life and to inform policy development, project design and advocacy strategies that focus on the earlier stages of life.[12]

Legal frameworks must ensure, at a minimum, that the rights of older women in particular are fully addressed in gender equality provisions but also that such frameworks recognise the accumulated and continuing effects of discrimination and *the additional impact of ageism*. Examples include:

- discriminatory pension laws and policies (not valuing/accounting for women's lifetime of unpaid/informal care work)
- particular and discriminatory age limits on access to services (eg, health screening programmes; credit)
- compulsory and discriminatory retirement ages[13]
- denial of rights to service provision (eg, to sexual and reproductive health services[14])

Recommendations[15]

1. Address the structural causes of income insecurity in older age by creating opportunities for older men and women to participate in income-generating activities, as well as universal access to social pension schemes.
2. Ensure that women can own and inherit land and property and can use these assets to access credit across all stages of the life course, and address the implications of changing land use and ownership on older women.
3. Work with organisations that address labour rights and protections (both in the formal and informal sectors) to protect the rights of women workers of all ages and to abolish discriminatory practices such as unequal pay for equal work.
4. Encourage more equitable distribution of caring responsibilities within the family and community.
5. Address the limitations that caring responsibilities place on older women in securing an income through productive work, and tackle discriminatory practices that nudge or force older women out of employment.
6. Recognise and mitigate the lack of social capital men may have accumulated over the life course, potentially impacting their chances of being cared for by their families in older age.
7. Design more sensitive research methods to ascertain how care responsibilities are distributed.
8. Use a *gender-transformative approach* to address the *whole life course* to ensure maximum functional ability, independence and wellbeing in older age, irrespective of health status.
9. Recognise and resource the vital role that environments play in supporting healthy ageing.
10. Advocate for gender-supportive environments which *remain important* in older age to complement *gender-sensitive programme delivery* on health and care for older women and men.
11. Commission more action research to pilot new types of interventions and services on violence, abuse and neglect –, particularly how ageism can lead to violence and interact with other harmful processes and norms that sustain gender-based violence and gender-based discrimination, driving specific types of violence.
12. Commission research to underpin gender-sensitive humanitarian programming and gender-transformative planning and advocacy.
13. Listen to and amplify the voices of older men and women in humanitarian contexts.

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12 In March 2018, the United Nations Statistical Commission agreed to establish the Titchfield City Group on ageing-related statistics and disaggregated data. HelpAge International has been a founding partner in this initiative, together with the Department for International Development (DFID), multilaterals and statistical offices. The purpose of the group is to systematically address data gaps on ageing and older people in national and international data systems.

13 Older men and women can be discriminated against through unjustified compulsory retirement policies or being forced to retire early. For example, in Kenya, forced early retirement has been recently contested in the courts in Kenya University Staff Union & another v Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (2018), see: http://kenyalaw.org/caselaw/cases/view/152388/ (2 July 2019)

14 SDG 5.6.1 Indicator: Proportion of women *aged 15-49 years* who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive healthcare.

15 The full recommendations are available in the original briefing pagper from HelpAge International/Warwick University. This represents a shortened list.

Conclusion

We recommend that our framework and supporting evidence be disseminated to provide a better understanding for international NGOs, national and local governments – and, indeed, for older people themselves – of how gender and ageing intersect.

At a **strategic level,** we recommend that **governments adopt legal and policy frameworks to ensure gender equality throughout the life course and that funding bodies prioritise research on older age from a gender perspective.** At an **operational level,** we recommend that practitioners and researchers: (1) disaggregate data collection at all levels to inform research and policy development; and (2) pursue gender-sensitive and age-inclusive programming to inform *gender-transformative advocacy for the whole life course*.

Appendix 2: Are legal and policy frameworks informed by an understanding of 'age' and 'care' in African plural legal systems?

The steady increase in the population of older people in sub-Saharan Africa – estimated at 43 million in 2010 and rising to 67 million by 2025[16] – has been the driving force behind regional efforts to pass laws to protect older persons' rights. The African Union (AU), recognising how various axes of vulnerability intersect with each other, has made provisions for the unique experiences of older persons with disabilities and older women.[17]

At the international level, there is recognition of the need to build inclusive societies and that national governments need support to achieve this. To this end, the United Nations (UN) adopted the 1982 International Plan of Action on Ageing, which later informed the UN Principles for Older Persons in 1991 and the UN Proclamation on Ageing in 1992. In 2002, the UN adopted the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing. There is, however, no international convention on ageing; this gap at the international level is reflected in some national contexts, with few specific provisions on the protection of older persons' rights.

The SDGs' commitment to 'leave no one behind' provides a platform for the inclusion of older persons in development agendas. However, implementation will require national governments to put in place measures that protect, respect, guarantee and promote the rights of all older persons.

This policy brief analyses the opportunities set out under the African regional legislative frameworks on ageing, and how these can help fill gaps identified in three national contexts: Kenya, Ethiopia and Malawi.

Outline of the policy brief
Following the efforts that have been made at the regional level, it is clear that there has been traction in the protection of the rights of older persons. It is however important to analyse the extent to which these regional provisions have impacted the way in which the rights of older persons are protected at the national level. This paper discusses the mechanisms that have been put in place by the African union, outlines the efforts that have been at the national level in three countries: Kenya, Malawi and Ethiopia, comparing the gaps that exist between national level initiatives and those at the regional level.

Key questions
1. What are the regional provisions on the rights of older persons in Africa?
2. How do these provisions relate to provisions on the rights of women and the rights of persons with disabilities in Africa?
3. How do the national and devolved frameworks in Kenya, Ethiopia and Malawi provide for the rights of older persons?
4. How do national and devolved frameworks in Kenya, Ethiopia and Malawi address questions of intersectionality?
5. What is the relationship between the SDGs and the regional and national frameworks on the rights of older persons?

Legal framework for the recognition and protection of older persons in Africa

- **The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981)**
Article 18 of the African Charter (known as the Banjul Charter) provides for the protection of the family as the natural unit and basis of society. Article 18(2) further imposes a duty upon the state to assist the family, and emphasises that the family is the custodian of morals and traditional values recognised by the community. Article 18(4) provides that the aged and persons with disabilities have the right to special measures of protection in keeping with their physical and moral needs.

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16 World Health Organization Regional Office for Africa, 'Ageing', https://www.afro.who.int/health-topics/ageing
17 Ibid.

- **The African Union Policy Framework and Plan of Action on Ageing (2002)**

Recognises that while it is assumed that in traditional African contexts older persons are entitled to respect, this is not always the case. Older persons in Africa face various forms of abuse and discrimination. The policy calls for the passing of legislative frameworks at the regional and national levels to protect the rights of older persons and for the elimination of all forms of discrimination on the basis of age. At the regional level, it recommended passing the Additional Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa. The policy further calls for a standardised definition of older persons (recommending aged 60 years and older). Also recommends integrating the needs of older persons into already existing policies of member states.

- **African Union Kigali Declaration on Human Rights (2003)**

Paragraph 20 calls on member states to adopt a protocol for the protection of the rights of older people and persons with disabilities. Re-affirms the position that the rights of older persons in Africa is a human rights issue that requires responses through appropriate legislative frameworks.

- **Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa (2016)**

The protocol comprehensively provides for the recognition and protection of the rights of older persons. It prohibits discrimination against older persons and requires states to take measures to: encourage the elimination of cultural and social stereotypes that marginalise older persons; take corrective measures in those areas where discrimination and all forms of stigmatisation against older persons continue to exist (in law and in practice); and support and enforce local, national, regional, continental and international customs, traditions and initiatives to eradicate all forms of discrimination against older persons.

The specific rights covered under the protocol include: access to justice and equal protection before the law; right to make decisions; protection against discrimination in employment; social protection; protection from abuse and harmful traditional practices; protection of older women; care and support; residential care; support for older persons taking care of vulnerable children; protection of older persons with disabilities; protection of older persons in conflict and disaster situations; access to health services; access to education; participation in programmes and recreational activities; accessibility; awareness on ageing and preparation for old age.

Article 20 provides for duties and is informed by African traditional systems and conceptions of the role of older people in society. It thus recognises that older persons have the duty to: mentor and pass on knowledge and experience to the younger generations; foster and facilitate intergenerational dialogue and solidarity within their families and communities; and play a role in mediation and conflict resolution.

The protocol mirrors the reasoning in the Banjul Charter on the role of the family in providing care for older persons, and the need for the state to support families in providing such care. Article 10 provides that States Parties shall: adopt policies and legislation that provide incentives to family members who provide home care for older persons; and identify, promote and strengthen traditional support systems to enhance the ability of families and communities to care for older family members. Thus, the family is seen as the core unit within which care is to be provided, and the protocol imposes a duty upon the State to support the family. This, however, does not preclude residential care; States Parties are required to provide this as an option under Article 11.

Article 12 recognises the unique position of older persons in Africa who provide care to vulnerable children, within the context of the family. States Parties are required to adopt measures to ensure that indigent older persons who take care of orphans and vulnerable children receive financial, material and other support; and ensure that when children are left in the care of older persons, any social or other benefits designed for the children are remitted to the older persons. Here, the protocol provides for the protection of the vulnerable older person who then has to care for a vulnerable young child, thus recognising the existence of a family unit that is characterised by distinct forms of vulnerability.

National frameworks for the recognition and protection of older persons

Kenya

The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection is mandated to deal with older persons' issues. The National Gender and Equality Commission is also mandated to address inequality and discrimination against vulnerable categories of persons, including older persons. The national statutory and institutional framework is fragmented, with no single piece of legislation harmonising the range of provisions for older persons currently housed under the Social Assistance Act, National Social Security Fund Act, National Hospital Insurance Fund Act and the Pensions Act. Much of the existing legislation on ageing is limited to labour, employment and retirement.

The Constitution is informed by the 2009 National Policy on Older Persons and Ageing, whose goal is *"… to provide an environment that recognizes, empowers, and facilitates Older Persons to participate in the society and enjoy their rights, freedoms and live in dignity"*. To this end, it recognises that the care of older persons is the responsibility of both the family and the state; that participation by older persons in development processes is important; and that there is a need to protect, respect, promote and guarantee the rights of older persons.

Article 27 prohibits discrimination on the basis of age (although the emphasis is on children and youth). Ironically, this is evidenced in the Constitution itself, where provisions relating to age target children or youth (aged 18 to 35 years).

Article 57 adds further protections, and emphasises the role of the family in providing care. However, there are fewer provisions for older persons than for women or persons with disabilities (for example, in terms of representation of their issues in Parliament or other decision making bodies).

Although Kenya is subject to the provisions of the Banjul Charter (by dint of Articles 2(5) and (6)), it is not yet a party to the Protocol on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa.

At present, Kenya's Constitution and various statutes address issues of gender and disability but do not take into account the intersecting nature of vulnerability and inequality (for instance, provisions on gender do not make further provisions for older women, while provisions on disability do not make further provisions for older persons with disabilities).

Ethiopia

Section 41(5) of Ethiopia's Constitution stipulates that "*the State shall, within available means, allocate resources to provide rehabilitation and assistance to the physically and mentally disabled, the aged, and to children who are left without parents or guardian*".

The 1996 Development Social Welfare Policy was the first step towards a policy framework that makes provisions on ageing in Ethiopia. The National Plan of Action on Older Persons (1998–2007) was adopted in 2006. It recognises and protects the rights of older persons and their inclusion in development processes. The Plan also recognises that care for older persons is mainly provided by the family, and recognises community care as an integral part of caring for older persons. In 2012, the National Social Protection Policy was adopted to provide support to vulnerable groups, including older persons.

Malawi

Section 13(j) of the Constitution stipulates that "*The State shall actively promote the welfare and development of the people of Malawi by progressively adopting and implementing policies and legislation aimed at achieving the following goals: To respect and support the elderly through the provision of community services and to encourage participation in the life of the community.*"

The National Policy for Older Persons, adopted in 2016, aims to ensure the inclusion of older persons in development processes and provides for the protection, promotion, respect and guarantee of older persons' rights. It further recognises the need to support families and communities in caring for older persons. The Ministry of Disability and Elderly Affairs is mandated to ensure implementation of the policy.

Intersectionality under the African Union legislative framework

The AU's legislative framework recognise that the intersections between age, gender and disability shape and inform the unique experiences of older women and older persons with disabilities, and makes provisions that respond to those intersecting identities.

Article 22 of the Maputo Protocol (the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa) obliges States Parties to provide protection to older women and take specific measures commensurate with their physical, economic and social needs as well as their access to employment and professional training; and to ensure the right of older women to freedom from violence, including sexual abuse, discrimination based on age, and the right to be treated with dignity. This provision is further reinforced by Article 9 of the Protocol on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa, which provides that States Parties shall: ensure the protection of the rights of older women from violence, sexual abuse and discrimination based on gender; put in place legislation and other measures that guarantee protection of older women against abuses related to property and land rights; and adopt appropriate legislation to protect older women's inheritance rights.

Article 13 of the Protocol on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa provides that States Parties shall: adopt legislation and other measures to protect the rights of older persons with disabilities; ensure that such legislation and measures comply with regional and international standards; and ensure that older persons with disabilities have access to assistive devices and specialised care. Article 30 provides for the recognition and protection of the rights of older persons with disabilities on an equal basis with other older persons. This wording suggests that disability introduces another dimension of vulnerability that can lead to forms of discrimination that may not necessarily be experienced on the basis of old age only. Article 30 further makes reference to older women with disabilities, requiring States Parties to take into account age and gender-related aspects of disability in programming and resourcing. The protocol thus recognises that age, gender and disability can represent intersecting vulnerabilities.

Gaps in knowledge and further questions
- How can the state and the market support families to ensure adequate care for older persons?
- What is the role of the family, the state and the market in ensuring the inclusion of older persons in development?
- How do customary norms support, promote or impede the provision of care for older persons within the family?

Recommendations

National policy makers should:
- Ratify the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa and promulgate national legislation mirroring its provisions.
- Develop suitable supervisory/monitoring mechanisms and develop legal expertise and access to support so that older people can challenge discrimination and advocate for their rights.
- Implement awareness-raising programmes on family, community and state duties and responsibilities to older people to ensure that ageism does not affect planning or service provision, and develop a framework to monitor and evaluate progress.
- Clarify, within national policy, the role of lower levels of government in supporting families and communities to care for older persons.
- Develop a curriculum on tackling age discrimination/ageism in schools and universities and develop suitable materials for use in training.

Conclusion

Laws plays an important role in protecting human rights, thus through the adoption of the AU Protocol on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa, much has already been achieved. The focus now shifts to ratification of the Protocol, which will ensure that it comes into force. Further, national legislation to implement the Protocol throughout the region is also important.

Appendix 3: Caring and ageing under customary law in Africa

Despite progress in developing and adapting laws, policies and programmes to address older people's needs and uphold their rights, in many countries and contexts in Africa, older people still rely on customary law to guarantee their wellbeing. In many rural settings, care has traditionally been provided on the basis of clan and family, in line with their respective customary laws. However, customary law can also be an obstacle to the provision of care and can essentially exclude certain categories of older persons from receiving care. It is against this background that this policy brief highlights some of the salient issues in customary protection and care for older persons in Africa, by addressing some key questions.

How does culture construct 'elderly' or older people, and how does this affect the provision of care?
Generally, older persons are defined as individuals who have attained advanced age (the WHO and the Kenyan Constitution define them as persons above 60 years).[18] However, cultural perceptions do not seem to use age; rather, they consider physical vulnerability and functional incapacity as determinants of old age. Having grandchildren, sons-in-law or daughters-in-law is sometimes considered as a sign of old age and therefore confers that status.

The level of care conferred on older people increases over time, depending on the level of physical incapacity. So considerations of what constitutes an older person under customary law and formal law are very different. In some cases, conditions associated with old age (such as dementia) may be considered outcomes of evil spirits associated with what a person may have done (or not done) in the past. Accordingly, families are often unwilling to take such older persons to hospital and prefer to use traditional forms of medicine.[19] This category of older people may, in essence, be classed as mentally unstable, and therefore confined to the home, subjected to cultural prescribed means of handling mental health problems or illnesses.

On the other hand, older people are essentially a socially constructed group – individuals who other than being of advanced aged are considered to possess wisdom and or high social status, and thus consulted on personal and communal matters. Many play a central role in dispute resolution at the family, clan and community levels. At the same time, older people are often associated with traditional medicine and witchcraft factors that influence their wellbeing. For instance, an elder who is associated with witchcraft is generally feared and ostracised and receives significantly less communal sympathy and support if they become infirm. In some instances, such elders are killed or blamed for the challenges that face the community, family or clan.

The distinction between older people and elders often means that older people who are considered as elders receive more care than older people who are not elders. First, this is because they are perceived as being more valuable and therefore worthy of more protection. The role of physical and mental ill health or frailty in the social construction of 'older people'' and its implications for care requires further exploration and discussion. However, since more older men are essentially considered as 'elders'' compared to older women, there is more care available for older men than older women. This is partly because older women retain the gendered caring obligations that come with marriage and thus have to continue caring for their husbands even in old age. Men in polygamous marriages also receive much more care compared to women in such unions.

To what extent does culture tap into family structures to guarantee care?
Generally speaking, care is provided at the family level, typically through clan or family structures;[20] the closer the family member to the older person, the stronger the obligation to provide care. Since marriage unites two families, it essentially creates two sets of care obligations. For instance, upon marriage, the woman is assumed to have joined the man's family and therefore has a caring obligation both to her parents and family and to her in-laws. The husband and wife have different obligations to each other's parents. For instance, a married woman would be living far from her parents and

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18 See Article 260 of the Constitution of Kenya, see also WHO, https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/ageing-and-health. For detailed discussions on the understanding of ageing across regions and cultures, see https://www.who.int/healthinfo/survey/ageingdefnolder/en/

19 See Uwakwe R and Modebe I, 'Community and family care responses for persons with dementia in Eastern Nigeria', *Global Ageing: Issues & Action* 4:3, 2007, pp.35-43

20 Lombard A and Kruger E, 'Older persons: the case of South Africa', *Ageing International* 34, 2009, p.119

therefore expected to provide physical care for her parents only sporadically, though her and her husband would be expected to provide material care (such as money) regularly. However, the married woman would be expected to provide regular physical care to the man's parents, especially his mother. Similarly, the man would be expected to provide material care to his wife's parents and provide physical care for his father. Within the wider family, family care is perceived as a reciprocal phenomenon in which family members provide free care in anticipation of receiving free care if and when they need it.[21] Failing to provide care often lowers a person's status in the family and may essentially compromise the provision of care for that person should he/she become old and vulnerable or in need of care.

To what extent does culture exclude some older people from care?

In one way, culture creates an obligation for family and clan members to care for older persons. Caring for older people is therefore seen as an obligation on the entire clan rather than the responsibility of the individual's children or of government. The social construction of fatherhood, motherhood, sons and daughters often creates a wide network of people with a primary obligation for care but who can draw support from other family members. For instance, in many communities, 'a father' goes beyond the biological father to include father figures – the brothers of the biological father. Similarly, a 'mother' can range from the biological mother to the sisters of the biological mother to (sometimes) the wives of 'uncles'. An obligation on a child to care for a father or mother therefore stretches to the socially constructed father/ mother. Since care is partially tied to capacity under customary law, in situations where children are unable to provide care, the obligation usually transfers to other family members.

However, it should be noted that customary law constructs care in two ways: material care (which includes food, payment of bills, shelter, clothing, etc.); and physical care (which involves bathing, washing clothes, feeding, administering medication, and providing mobility support). While customary law can also act as a barrier to the provision of both types of care, there seem to be more barriers on providing physical care than material care. For instance, in many communities, custom dictates that an older person can accept payment of medical bills or other monetary benefits from any member of society or family. At the same time, many communities are not very restrictive as to who can build a house for the older person. However, physical care is much more restricted, and often linked to gender (for example, it may not be deemed acceptable for daughters to bathe their fathers just as sons may not bathe their mothers). Sons-in-law face similar restrictions on providing physical care to their mother-in-law and father-in law.

Culture can also account for resistance to institutionalised care for an older person. Although globally, the question of institutionalised care for older persons is generally controversial, African culture is generally resistant to institutionalised care – first, because institutionalised care is seen to translocate older persons from their natural habitat, and second, because older persons are seen to have a customary attachment to ancestral land. There is thus a need to explore how African societies can tap into institutionalised care in a way that does not promote cultural resistance, given that traditional family and clan systems may no longer have the capacity to guarantee care for older persons.

Whereas in many communities it is deemed acceptable for daughters-in-law – considered as an additional hand for caring duties – to bathe mothers-in-law, they cannot bathe fathers-in-law. Some communities (such as the Kipsigis of Kenya) confer the responsibility for bathing older people to the children and grandchildren of corresponding genders. Within this context, older people without children/grandchildren are often excluded from physical care. To fill this gap, some people resort to woman-to-woman marriages, traditional adoption of children, or physical relocation to the home of a relative. Similarly, failure by the older person to fulfil certain rituals upon the death of a spouse can militate against that person receiving care, as it would restrict people from closely interacting with the older person. For instance, among the Luo of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, failure by a widow to "get inherited"[22] after the death of the husband bars her from entering the house of any clan member, essentially limiting her ability to receive care. Such failures to fulfil customary obligations have different care implications for widows and widowers, depending on the local cultural context.

Urbanisation and migration mean that many people live in cities and towns so are not able to look after their parents in older age.[23] One option is to move one's parents to the city. However, customary

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21 Ibid

22 Wife inheritance is a common practice among the Luo. When a a man dies, his wife is taken on by his brothers, another clan member or another man in the community. The practice is considered to allow for continuity of the deceased man's lineage and provide protection and means of living for the widow. However, it has also been criticised for commodification of widows and for encouraging the spread of HIV, among other issues.

23 Schatz E and Seeley J, 'Gender, ageing and care work in East and Southern Africa: a review', *Global Public Health* 10:10, 2015, pp.1185-1200

law often places restrictions on living spaces, including sometimes barring in-laws from living with their sons and daughters in the same rooms, so relocation is sometimes not possible or desirable for parents or children. This means that only wealthy families with bigger living spaces can physically relocate their older parents. Many older people are unwilling to relocate as they believe they have a customary obligation to care for ancestral lands.[24]

The links between care and fulfilment of customary obligations often place older people in a dilemma. For instance, for some older people, their faith rejects some customary rituals associated with the death of a spouse or child, yet this can limit their interaction with other members of the community, thus compromising their care entitlements. Within this context, the older person is forced to choose between forfeiting their freedom of religion (faith) and fulfilling their customary duties (which entitle them to care), or rejecting customary rituals and waiving their care entitlements.

The disruption of traditional family structures and the implication for care
It is noteworthy that traditionally, care was not paid for. Family members would often care for older people, first as part of their cultural obligation and appreciation for the care they received as children, and second, because they anticipated blessings or some form of intangible benefits from caring for the person.[25] This care was typically provided by family members who lived nearby the older person. However, over time, family structures have changed and young people increasingly live far from their home village and older family members. As already noted, urbanisation has left many older persons physically and socially isolated, with few (if any) people close by to provide care. In some instances, the only people living near are other older people who are also in need of care. In addition, in many countries, the average family size has reduced, which means a smaller pool of potential carers, as opposed to the past, when polygamy and larger families meant that there were always children nearby to care for older people in need. At the same time, the emergence of single-parent families, co-parenting and other modern family forms has contributed to the erosion of traditional family structures and thus compromised care.

Epidemics such as HIV have also had an impact, with many older people losing their grown-up children to AIDS,[26] which leaves them vulnerable on two counts: first, losing their primary caregivers means they are often reliant on more distant family members; and second, they often have to care for their orphaned grandchildren – a particularly difficult task for people who themselves need care. Even when such individuals receive cash transfers or pensions, customary sharing requirements mean these resources must be shared with the orphaned children and other vulnerable family members.[27] The fact that grandparents (especially grandmothers) often have the customary obligation to care for children born outside wedlock (by their daughters until and unless they are married) equally puts strains on their meagre income. These realities have altered the customary construction of older people from being receivers of care to providers of care.

Although older persons in rural and urban areas face significant health, economic and social challenges, older persons in urban slums – far from the social protection provided by customary law – can be most vulnerable, particularly if they left their home for reasons that would make it difficult for them to be accepted upon their return.[28]

Recommendations
Although formal law defines and constructs older persons differently, there is a need to re-examine how customary law constructs old age, not only to ensure that programmes are aligned to customary conceptions of old age but also to tap into the customary and social infrastructure that anchors the provision of care. This process must start with analysis of the various care processes available at community level and how they can be strengthened. There is also a need to explore how customary obstacles to care can be addressed within the wider framework of protections for older persons. Within this context, state and non-state actors should seek to strengthen those aspects of culture that promote care for older people while discouraging aspects that exclude and militate against care.

24 See Nyangweso M, 'Transformations of care of the aged among Africans – a study of the Kenyan situation', *Aging & Mental Health* 2:3, 1998, pp.181-185

25 Mbele J, 'The elder in African society: the view from folklore and literature', *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships* 2:3/4, 2004, pp.53-61

26 Douglass R, 'The aging of Africa: challenges to African development', *African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development* 16:1, 2016, pp.1–15

27 See Lombard and Kruger, 'Older persons: the case of South Africa', *Ageing International* 34:3, 2009, p.119

28 See Sykes J, 'Persistent realities', *Global Ageing: Issues & Action* 4:3, 2007, pp.3-4

Knowledge gaps and key questions

- How does the social construction of 'age', 'ageing', 'old' and 'elderly' impact on care? To what extent does it compromise the wellbeing of the older person?
- How can the state tap into customary structures of care for older persons?
- How does customary law exclude older persons from care and how can custodians of customary law such as elders either reinforce and/or address this?
- How should caregiving for older people in Africa be structured? Should the state be the primary caregiver, supported by families, or should families be the primary caregivers, drawing support from the state? What implications does this construction have on the actual delivery of care in view of the customary obstacles?
- To what extent is institutionalised care a viable option in the protection of older persons in Africa?
- How can the state partner with local customary structures to provide care for older people in view of HIV and modern family systems, and other factors that have disrupted traditional care structures?
- How do customary obligations to share resources impact on cash transfer and pension programmes for older persons? How do older people respond to these obligations? Do they share the resources? What is the implication of this on the ability of cash transfers/ pensions to meet older people's needs?
- How can the wellbeing of older people be guaranteed in view of their roles in caring for children orphaned by HIV and for children born outside wedlock? What are the gendered dimensions of care for older people in this context?

Appendix 4: The role of older people in shaping age-friendly legal and policy frameworks

Overview of the issue

Africa is experiencing a more rapid increase of older people than any other region. The number of older persons aged 60 years and above is projected to increase from 69 million in 2017 to 226 million in 2050.[29] Despite this change of population age structure, laws, policies and programmes about and for older people have not been modified to cope with older people's longevity, capacity and complex vulnerabilities. As a result, many older people are subject to ageism and majority live in poverty or extreme poverty. They experience barriers in accessing basic and humanitarian services like healthcare, education, justice, legal and financial services, and information. This is despite human rights[30] being universal and unchanged across the life course.

On a positive note, however, a substantial number of African countries continue to adopt and roll out national policies on ageing with visible assigned budgets.[31] A few countries[32] have established special organisations or included ageing within the remit of a particular ministry. Increasingly, African countries are mainstreaming older people in social protection policies (mainly through social pensions or cash transfers), health, and HIV policies. Current priorities for global and regional development[33] focus on prosperity, dignity and rights of people of all ages through commitments on equality and non-discrimination, human rights, and 'leave no one behind'. Despite these progressive commitments, minimal age-friendly policies, programmes, services and budget allocations have been reported.

Inadequate technical capacity among policy makers on ageing and older people, coupled with inadequate evidence and data, are among the biggest barriers to integrating older people's needs and rights in laws, policies and programmes. Simultaneously, many older people lack an understanding of their rights and entitlements, how government works, and the role and spaces for citizen participation in public policy making processes. Limited supportive structures to create an effective social accountability platform result in weak demand for action on ageing and make it difficult to hold duty-bearers to account.

Older people in both rural and urban settings continue to be marginalised and excluded in legal, policy and programmatic frameworks, resulting in difficulties in accessing appropriate services and participation in public policy processes. Older people face discrimination based on older age and other intersecting forms of discrimination such as physical ability, gender, and geographical location (among others).

However, there are many opportunities to ensure appropriate age-friendly legal, policy and programmatic frameworks to safeguard the rights of people across the life course, including into older age. Participation and creation of effective social accountability, led by older people, is urgently needed. However, older people need to know their rights and the implication of these rights for public policy processes to engage policy makers to respond to the needs and issues facing an ageing population.

This policy brief highlights successes, challenges and gaps across the region and beyond on the role of older people in advancing age-friendly legal, policy and programmatic frameworks. It also provides insights into some of the factors that act as catalysts for including older people in legal, policy and programmatic frameworks.

Despite some recognition and awareness of the challenges and issues facing older people, there continues to be a significant gap in knowledge and understanding. The complex causes of discrimination and marginalisation of older people – often based on ageism, intersecting identities and inequalities such as gender, disability and income – require more research and engagement with older people at all levels to ensure their effective inclusion.

[29] UNDESA, World population ageing 2017, New York, UNDESA, 2017
[30] Universal Declaration of Human Rights and African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights
[31] HelpAge International, *Ageing in the twenty-first century: A Celebration and A Challenge*, UNFPA/HelpAge International, 2012
[32] Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa, Tunisia and Uganda
[33] Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063

Key questions

This policy brief highlights key factors that empower older people at all levels to engage effectively in public policy processes. Capacity and coordination of older people and their supporting organisations, effective utilisation of citizen and civil society engagement spaces, and consolidating relevant partnership relationships and collaborations are some of the areas discussed to show transformative interventions to promote the rights of older people.

The brief addresses the following questions:
- What are the critical factors that influence power dynamics to enable older people's voices to bring about policy change to protect their rights and ensure inclusion?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of older people's organisations in developing, adopting, implementing, monitoring and reporting on laws and policies?
- Why are partnership and collaboration important in promoting inclusive laws, policies and programmes?
- How do gender dimensions impact the participation of older people?

What are the critical factors that influence power dynamics to enable older people's voices to bring about legal and policy change to uphold their rights and ensure inclusion?

- **Capacity for civil society to maintain sustained engagement with older people and policy makers**

Civil society organisations (CSOs) are key to building capacity for social accountability and amplifying the voice of older people in decision making processes at all levels. Capacity-building activities have focused on establishing older people's associations, empowering older people with information and knowledge on their rights and entitlements, facilitating regular dialogue between older people and policy makers through sustained campaigns, and enabling older people's effective participation in decision making processes.

There have been numerous campaigns to demand older people's inclusion in laws, policies, programmes and services, including: Grandmothers to Grandmothers,[34] Ageing Equal,[35] AgeWithRights,[36] Ageism,[37] and Age Demand Action.[38] These campaigns have resulted in increasing support among UN Member States for a new convention on the rights of older people, as well as improved national ageing policies and age-friendly services.

- **Older people's capacity to engage**

In countries and communities where older people have been empowered on their rights and entitlements, realise their constitutional rights to participation, have a coordinated movement that effectively engages decision making processes, and undertake sustained campaigns, there have been notable positive changes in policies, programmes and services in favour of older persons. Special groups of older people have been empowered with specific skills on activism, alongside older citizen monitoring groups and older people's champions. As a result, older people have gained confidence to speak out and demand that their issues be addressed by local government and the international community.

For instance, the Grandmothers to Grandmothers campaign in Uganda (led by grandmothers) has pushed for older people to be included in HIV and AIDS policies and programmes, to increase the benefits to orphans under their care, and for age-inclusive social protection mechanisms (including a universal pension). Older people have taken part in key national, regional and international forums such as the Commission on the Status of Women, the United Nations Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing, and the Post-2015 SDGs process.

- **Government's willingness and capacity to engage**

Countries with a high proportion of older people such as Mauritius and South Africa continue strengthening and modifying laws, policies and programmatic frameworks without much pressure from older people and supporting organisation. Countries with institutional coordination mechanisms

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34 http://grandmotherscampaign.org/
35 https://www.grandmagazine.com/2018/10/ageing-equal-international/
36 https://www.chr.up.ac.za/campaigns/agewithrights-campaign
37 https://www.who.int/ageing/ageism/campaign/en/
38 https://www.helpage.org/get-involved/campaign-with-us/ada-global/

for ageing (Mauritius, Uganda and Seychelles) have shown a steady improvement of legal and policy environment for older people. For example in Uganda, the established National Older People Council, a structure that runs from national level to local level has increased representation of older people in government decision-making structures and has increased integration of older people in public policy making processes. In South Africa, according to North-West University research, municipalities that perform better on older people's wellbeing, are those with dedicated units that facilitate a coordinated multisector approach with civil society, involving intergenerational dialogue, translating policies into programmes, and making deliberate efforts in developing tailor made ageing activities[39].

In Rwanda organizations of older people have brokered relationships with government and used the existing 'Omuganda'[40] government structures and processes. Since 2017, September Omuganda activities are dedicated to older people and their issues, prompting the government to accelerate policy and programmatic changes in favour of older people. A draft national ageing and older people policy is in place and about to be tabled to the cabinet for adoption. At the same time, Rwanda now shows positive interest in regional and global discourse on strengthening legal and policy frameworks on ageing. South Africa and Mauritius openly support a new convention for the rights of older persons. Attitudes and practices of society and policy makers towards older people have changed positively.

Challenges on resources particularly finance, technical and a shortage of human resource personnel in ministries are major barriers to coordination and inclusion of older people in national and sector specific processes. Additionally, limited evidence and data continue to hinder necessary legal and policy changes and positioning of older people in sustainable national development frameworks and debates. Further, the in-adequate voice of older people to demand for action on their issues, slows the progress countries are making on ageing and rights of older people.

- **Ageism and harmful practices**

Ageism is widely tolerated resulting to negative perceptions and attitudes towards old age and older people. It is rarely challenged. In many parts of Africa, older people are accused of witchcraft because of age and gender stereotypes are common. Many older people have been forced out of their homes or even murdered. In Tanzania for instance, the Legal and Human Rights Centre reported 394 cases of killings of older persons due to witchcraft allegations in 2016, of whom 70% were older women[41]. Ageism results to discrimination, neglect, abuse and violence on older people as well their exclusion in policies and programmes.

Ageism is a contributory factor to the violations of rights that older women and men experience at the family, community and institutional levels. Older people experience multiple forms of discrimination because of accumulated inequalities during their life. The intersectionality of age with disability, ethnic origin, location of residence, literacy levels, gender, and poverty at different life stages can lead to high levels of poverty, discrimination, abuse and marginalisation in old age.[42] Older people's rights to access resources such as property and services such as social protection, healthcare, justice, equality before the law, and the rights to housing, privacy and a private life continue unabated. Age is a barrier to employment, with many countries forcing older people to retire at the age of 60 despite their continuing capability for full employment or failing to provide reskilling programmes. Older women may be more affected because they live longer.

CSOs and older people have worked with national and international organisations to build anti-ageism campaigns to begin to reduce some of these negative perceptions and replace them with positive perceptions of ageing and old age. This will give older persons equal chances with other population groups to participate fully in society.

What are the roles and responsibilities of older people's organisations in the development, adoption, implementation, monitoring and reporting on laws and policy?

There is a growing number of organisations and coalitions supporting older people at all levels, which are amplifying the voice of older people to pressure duty-bearers to take action on ageing. Older people and their organisations are more active at subnational, national, subregional, regional and international debates. There is increased awareness of ageing and older people's issues and rights, including improving legal, policy and programmatic actions on ageing. Some are highlighted below.

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40 Government-led community initiative where citizens help each other once every month across the country

41 Tanzania Gender Networking Programme Gender Analysis report, 2015

- Efforts to empower older people to actively participate and strengthen their voices. The learning on effective social accountability needs to be documented and shared for scale-up to ensure just and equitable access to services and eradication of age-based and other forms of discrimination.[43] The region has witnessed an expansion of social protection programmes and age-friendly services such as healthcare, social protection and cash transfers, and accelerated their inclusion in sustainable and national development frameworks.
- Developing training modules for specialised skills such as activism, older citizen monitoring, paralegals, and ambassadors who continue to promote the voices of older people and/or collect data that has developed compelling messages for campaigns and advocacy. The Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People (GAROP), Grandmothers to Grandmothers, and HelpAge Network have all played an important role.
- Designing and delivering campaigns driven by older people. Ageing Equal and Ageism campaigns have facilitated a sustained interaction between older people and policy makers, resulting in positive changes (countries and stakeholders engaged in UN convention discussions have accelerated the development and adoption of national ageing policies and legal frameworks).
- Building the capacity of policy makers on the rights and entitlements of older people, with technical support to governments, intergovernmental organisations and UN systems on legal, policy and programmatic frameworks for older people but also on inclusion of older people in wider humanitarian and development debates. Older people's organisations have financed or co-designed national and intergovernmental laws, policies and programmes. HelpAge Ghana has supported the development of ageing policy and legal frameworks, while Africa Population and Health Research Center has provided technical support to design the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework for the AU Protocol on the Rights of Older People, with financial support from HelpAge.
- Designing and delivering high-level engagements through participation in government and civil society lead forums on processes relating to older people, including sustainable development, national development and humanitarian processes.
- Designing and delivering research and knowledge products to guide policy reform and support evidence-based programming, advocacy and policy-influencing strategies.
- Developing partnerships in resource mobilisation, including research, advocacy and campaigns.

However, many of the platforms and organisations are not well-positioned in key formal and informal government and civil society-led sustainable and national development processes. Humanitarian and human rights forums have minimal representation of older people and their organisations. There is an urgent need to address this to ensure older people's inclusion in multiple policy processes.

Why partnership and collaboration is important in promoting inclusive laws, policies and programmes

Partnership relationship-building for collaborative ventures continues to play a critical role in accelerating the institutionalisation of standalone ageing and older people policies as well as mainstreaming ageing and older people in laws, policies and programmes. These collaborative partnerships have brokered and shared expertise and undertaken high-level advocacy and policy-influencing activities, which has improved understanding on ageing and older people and advancement of age-sensitive laws, policies and programmes. Partnerships and collaboration have been useful in the following ways.

- Facilitating the empowerment of older people and consolidating older people's associations to augment the voice of older people and enable their participation in public policy processes. This has created demand for action on ageing. Through GAROP, the alliance partners have provided training for activists and facilitated older people to undertake advocacy and lobbying to end ageism and support a UN convention on the rights of older people.
- Mainstreaming older people across sectors and increasing their visibility within other population groups (such as older people with disabilities, and older women) to inform actions and national planning processes. The Africa Population and Health Research Center has collaborated with governments, UN bodies and civil society to improve data and evidence on urban issues, health and social protection. The Centre for Human Rights (University of Pretoria) has been promoting intergenerational dialogue and the AU Protocol on the Rights of Older People to ensure that its advocacy and policy-influencing work covers older women. It has also facilitated dialogues

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43 HelpAge International, *Ageways*, Issue 84, July 2016

between students and older people to encourage intergenerational collaboration, while encouraging university students to undertake research on older people.

While these initiatives have resulted in increased awareness on ageing and older people and recognition of multiple vulnerabilities, lack of capacity on how to mainstream ageing in disability and gender discussions and/or ensuring ageing and older people interventions reflect the disability and gender lens continue to be a major barrier to realising the rights of older people with multiple vulnerabilities.

- Development of standalone laws, policies and programmatic frameworks at all levels. HelpAge Ghana, a HelpAge network member in Ghana has over the years partnered with the Government of Ghana to improve the stand-alone age frameworks. So far, ageing and older people policy was approved in 2010 and the legal framework has been validated and being prepared to be tabled in the parliament.
- Collaboration among civil society, academia and governments has promoted a progressive integration of older people in frameworks and human resources development to address the wide range of older persons' needs and issues. For instance, the universities of Southampton and Oxford have collaborated with civil society and government institutions across Africa on research, and offers funded Master's and PhD programmes (gerontology, ageing and public policy).

While these initiatives have increased awareness on ageing and older people's intersecting vulnerabilities, lack of capacity on mainstreaming ageing in disability and gender discussions and/or ensuring that interventions on ageing and older people adopt a disability and gender lens continue to be major barriers to realising the rights of older people with multiple vulnerabilities.

How do gender dimensions influence participation of older people?
The gender dimensions of older people's participation in decision making processes are not well-documented so would need further research.[44] However, anecdotal accounts reveal that across the life course, women are likely to be disadvantaged in a number of areas: they are more likely than men to be poor, experience violence, have low literacy and numeracy, and acquire a disability, and are less likely to be financially secure and access social protection and healthcare. This, coupled with household and family care responsibilities, reduces women's time and ability to participate in decision making processes and denies them opportunity to take up leadership roles in their communities and countries.

There is a need to empower and promote older women's participation in decision making, including drafting, planning, implementing and monitoring gender-sensitive laws, policies, plans and strategies to ensure that women are at the forefront of decisions that affect their lives.

Recommendations
To continue the progress made thus far in involving older people in shaping laws, policies and programming, stakeholders should:

- Improve capacity-building for older people, the organisations that represent them, and policy makers on older people's issues and rights, and involve older people in the design and implementation of legal, policy and programmatic frameworks. Scale up older people's involvement in public policy formulation and data collection in all geographical areas to strengthen social accountability.
- Collect and synthesise compelling evidence on the situation of older people to enhance action and policy making on ageing and older people's rights.
- Accelerate the development, adoption and implementation of a UN convention on the rights of older people, and promote ratification and implementation of regional and national legal and policy frameworks for older people.
- Improve understanding of intersecting inequalities and develop technical competencies to ensure that ageing issues are mainstreamed in gender and disability processes and/or that ageing actions are sensitive to gender and disability.
- Strengthen partnerships and collaborative ventures, to focus on strategy, clarifying roles and responsibilities, improving coordination among government agencies and NGOs, and addressing the shortage of skilled staff and inadequate budget allocations.

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44 Stewart A and Lander J, *Transforming gender relations in an ageing world*, London and Warwick, HelpAge International/Warwick University, 2019

Knowledge gaps and key questions for future research

There is a lack of skills and knowledge on how to apply a life-course perspective and promote the inclusion of older people in gender and disability frameworks, including sustainable development and national development frameworks. There is also a lack of understanding of how human rights treaties apply to older people, which acts as a barrier to older people's inclusion in political, economic, social and cultural spheres.

Few governments and development partners use a human rights-based and non-discriminatory approach or have adopted a life-course perspective that addresses the range of vulnerabilities, inequalities and exclusion (leaving no one behind) that people experience. More work is needed with all sectorial and sustainable development stakeholders at all levels to uphold human rights and adopt a life-course approach to ensure that older people – as all other people – enjoy their freedom, rights and entitlements.

Key questions
- How can sufficient political will be generated to accelerate the development, adaption, ratification, implementation and monitoring of legal and policy frameworks on ageing and older people's rights, at all levels?
- What would it take to have policy makers invest more efforts on older people's issues and rights?

Conclusion

Despite some recognition and awareness of the challenges and issues facing older people, there continues to be a significant gap in knowledge and understanding. The complex causes of discrimination and marginalisation of older people – typically based on ageism, intersecting identities and inequalities such as gender, disability and income – highlight the need for more research and engagement with older people at all levels to ensure their effective inclusion so that they can play a key role in shaping the laws, policies, services and programmes that affect their lives.

Appendix 5: Country overview

Characteristic	Kenya	Ethiopia	Malawi
Population (60+)	1.9 million (in 2009) (5% of population); 53.4% women, 46.6% men; unevenly distributed counties Projected to be 2.6 million by 2020 (6% of population); and 9.5 by 2050 7%?	75 million (in 2006) 4.4% (3.3 million); 2011 5% of 81 million; ex 12.2 million urban dwellers 538,800; ex 62.9 million rural dwellers 2.8 million Projection 9% 2050	4.6% (2000) to 6.5% (2050) (from 550,000 to 2 million); 727,377 in 2016; 92% in rural areas
International/regional rights African Optional Protocols Women Older Persons	African Charter; International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD); Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); International Convention Against Torture (CAT) (torture/degrading treatment); disabilities; International Labour Organization (ILO) various UN Plan of Action on Ageing; AU Policy Framework on Ageing (2002) Ratified Not signed	CEDAW/ Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW) Madrid International Plan of Action (2002); AU Policy Framework on Ageing (2002) Signed not ratified Not signed	CEDAW Ratified Not signed
Constitution Articles	57: rights of older persons to participate fully; pursue personal development; dignity/respect free from abuse; reasonable care/assistance from families and state; 10(2) (b) states obliged to protect; 21(3) address needs; 27(4) equality/non-discrimination; 43(3) appropriate social security to older persons in need	41(5): economic and social rights - within available means allocate resources to provide rehabilitation and assistance to people with physical or mental disabilities, the aged; 25: equality; 35(1): women have equal rights with men (2) in marriage (3) entitled to affirmative measures (4) eliminate harmful practices, customs, laws (6) full consultation in policy processes	(13): policies and legislation for welfare (a) gender equality (g) disability (j) respect and support older people via community services and participation (20) equality sex, disability **not age** but other status; (24) rights of women
National policy/provisions	National Policy on Older Persons and Ageing (revised 2014) within Vision 2030; National Hospital Insurance Fund Act;	National Plan of Action on Older Persons (1998–2007) E.C	National Social Welfare Policy: Promoting Social Inclusion and Human Dignity (2018)

	Pensions Act; National Social Security Fund Act	National Policy of Ethiopian Women (1993) National Action Plan on Gender Equality into End Poverty Plan; National Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines (2010)	National Policy for Older Persons; National Gender Policy
Ministry responsibilities Age	Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Services	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA)	Department of Disability and Elderly Affairs in Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare
Gender	Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs	Ministry of Women, Children and Youth	Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare
Devolution	47 counties mainstream, identify/implement programmes over 5 yrs County Integrated Development Plans National Council for Older Persons and Ageing	9 Member States share legislative, executive and judicial powers according to Articles 51 and 52; state-level family laws; woreda, zonal, regional, federal	Local government authorities (ch XIV constitution) Local Government Act 1998 but consultative forums
Rights commissions	National Gender and Equality Commission Kenya National Human Rights Commission; Kenya Human Rights Commission (NGO)	Ethiopian Human Rights Commission	Malawi Human Rights Commission
Key issues identified	No specific law at national/county level on older people's rights **but bill**; pressure on extended family support/traditional social protection systems; some older people in urban areas destitute; unregulated institutions; intersection gender, disability, age	Not included in design and implementation of programmes/projects; no monitoring and evaluation systems; pressure on family/ community support but crucial; destitution in urban areas; older women; widows need care/care for grandchildren; Need for awareness raising; promotion of solidarity; rights	Need data; need civic education; Grave lack of social welfare human resources (HR) capacity; rising poverty among older people but gender differentials important – older women have higher rates of chronic illness; older women 5 times more likely to be widowed, live alone; strain on systems of care; violence, abuse and neglect
Research for evidence-based policy making	Little research; focus on rural areas; urban areas almost non-existent; need for diverse contexts	Little research: no data/policy on care for older persons or VAN or older women in regions	There is little research available but what there is suggests that African families

			are not always able to provide care; rather self-sufficiency and reciprocity in rural subsistence livelihoods
Research with partner organisation		HelpAge 2011 HelpAge 2013	HelpAge 2016 with Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare
Social pension	Universal 70-plus Jan 2018 + health insurance via National Hospital Insurance Fund	No universal pension/cash transfer Integrated basic social services with social cash transfer – Productive Safety Net Programme	Social Cash Transfer Programme 2006 Universal Pension Scheme 2018

Appendix 6: Participant List

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