



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



Ministry of Labour
and Social Affairs
Federal Republic of Somalia

National Validation Workshop on Ageing Strategy and Older Persons' Act

5-6 March 2024 - Mogadishu, Somalia

Report

I. Introduction

Somalia is witnessing a slow demographic transition. The number of older persons has reached about 724,000 persons in 2020, representing about 4.5% of the population, and it is expected to increase to reach 4 million persons in 2070 which is equivalent to almost 8% of the population. However, the older persons in Somalia constitute one of the most vulnerable groups as large segments of them are exposed to the risk of poverty, disease and isolation.

In light of this reality, and in the framework of technical assistance between the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA) in Somalia and Economic and Social Council for Western Asia (ESCWA), ESCWA organized a national validation workshop on the ageing strategy and older persons' act on 5 and 6 March 2024 in Mogadishu, Somalia.

The National Strategy on Ageing and the Older Persons' Act have been reviewed and revised based on feedback from governmental stakeholders. The purpose of this workshop was to offer a space to discuss further and validate the final versions of these documents.

The workshop was attended by representatives from the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Ministry of Planning, Investment, and Economic Development, Ministry of Education Culture and Higher Education (MoECHE), Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, and the Maternal Mercy and Development NGO.

Mr. Yusuf Mohamed Aden, State Minister of Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, delivered the opening remarks. He stressed on the importance of addressing older persons issues in So malia and expressed his appreciation to ESCWA for its continuous support.

Mr. Salah Moktar, Director of Social Affairs Department, thanked the participants and ESCWA for their collaboration and assistance on the act and strategy. He highlighted the importance and objectives of the workshop and encouraged the participants to contribute their valuable inputs.

Dr. Sara Salman, Population Affairs Officer at ESCWA, explained the scope of technical assistance provided by ESCWA to MoLSA which included a capacity building workshop on mainstreaming ageing in policy making, a national strategy for older persons, an older persons' act, and culminated in this national consultation to review and validate the strategy and act.

II. Workshop sessions

a. Scene-setting

Mr. Milad Pournik, Associate Social Affairs Officer at ESCWA, provided the main findings from the situation analysis on older persons in Somalia. He presented demographic data in addition to data on the health and educational outcomes of older persons in the country. Mr. Pournik also outlined the main national, regional, and international policies and frameworks of interest on the topic.

b. Ageing Strategy

Day 1 focused on the Ageing strategy. Dr. Sara Salman outlined the vision, mission, and guiding principles of the strategy. She explained that due to the relatively youthful population of Somalia, the strategy advocates for a life cycle approach to ageing. Dr. Salman also spoke about each of the six strategic goals that form the foundation of the strategy and the objectives under each of them.

Participants were split into groups to discuss each of the six strategic goals of the strategy. They took time to reflect on the goals and proposed potential actors and timelines for each action, which could inform a potential action plan for the strategy. They were invited to share their main findings with the broader group. Notable suggestions included:

- adding an objective on promoting community engagement to build the knowledge base about older persons and their priorities;
- adding an action to create a custodian agency to oversee day centers for older persons; and
- adding an action to provide cash transfer programs targeting older persons.

c. Older Persons' Act

Day 2 focused on the Older Persons' Act. Ms. Asha-Kin Duale outlined the Act and its main provisions. She went through the Act and discussed the main points of contention with participants. The issues that were discussed included:

- The age to define older persons in the Somali context, either 60 or 65;
- The Somali terminology to use to refer to 'older persons';
- Adding an article saying the Law will be periodically reviewed;
- There was consensus that there needs to be a complementary Ministerial Decree to accompany the Act that includes more detailed provisions on enforcement and implementation; and
- It was agreed that the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Commerce should be represented on the National Commission for Older Persons.

III. List of Participants (34)

Yusuf Mohamed Aden State Minister Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Salah Moktar Director of Social Affairs Department Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Asha-Kin Duale Duale Law & Consultancy Firm	Idil Mohamed Duale Law & Consultancy Firm
Sara Salman Population Affairs Officer ESCWA	Milad Pournik Associate Social Affairs Officer ESCWA
Zakaria Abdi Hasha Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Abshin Ibrahim Hussein Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Salad Hussein Abdule Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Muhiadin Salad Yusuf Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Suada Abdullahi Moallim Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Shukri Dahir Ali Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Mohamed Ibrahim Dugow Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Abdirahman Mohamed Osman Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Ibrahim Abdilatif Mohamed Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Maryan Ismail Mohamed Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Mohamed Husein Sharif Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Ali Abdirahman Boorei Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Abdinesin Mohamed Moheal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Abdifatah Abdi Hashi Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Muna Adan Mohamed	Abdiaaziz Ali Hassan

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Mohamud Mohamed Adan	Amin Jamal Mohamed
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Ibrahim Yusuf Mohamed	Abdisalam Mohamed Sheikh
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Abdullahi Abdirahim Abdullahi	Fidle Hugale Aldulle
Ministry of Education Culture and Higher Education (MoECHE)	Ministry of Education Culture and Higher Education (MoECHE)
Ahmed Abdullahi Sheikh	Idris Osman Ali
Ministry of Planning, Investment, and Economic Development	Ministry of Planning, Investment, and Economic Development
Abdullahi Sheikh Adom	Ibrahim Moalim Abdhkarim
Ministry of Justice	Ministry of Health
Salma Osman Ahmed	Amal Abdullahi Ahmed
Maternal Mercy and Development	Maternal Mercy and Development