



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

Population Ageing in the Small Island Developing States in Africa

Presentation by
Gideon RUTAREMWA, PhD
Population and Youth Section
Social Development Policy Division, ECA

United Nations Workshop on Preparing for the Challenges of Population Ageing in Sub-Saharan Africa: review of the draft survey tool to the sub-Saharan African context.

Lilongwe, Malawi, 19-21 July 2016

Background and Context

- f* ECA undertook research activities on “Ageing and development in Small Island Developing States in Africa,” as part of a field project on the Demographic Dividend in Africa
- f* ECA recognizes older persons’ potential relevance and their roles in achieving a demographic dividend.
- f* This research built on the findings and recommendations of the 2013 Africa Regional Review of the ICPD-PoA, and on the ECA report on the review of the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) in Africa.
- f* The research activities aimed at generating robust gender disaggregated knowledge and information on older persons in the Small Island Developing States of Cabo Verde,



Background and Context

In Africa, older people have traditionally been viewed in a positive light, as repositories of information and wisdom to society. In this regard there is need to have programs that keep them fit and experience a healthy ageing process and contribute their time, experience and knowledge, so they can feel useful, increase their self-esteem and contribute to improving existing social needs;

TETBT16 382c



Objectives of the Study

The broader objective of the study was to generate new knowledge and information on implications and opportunities of population ageing with attention to its gendered dimensions in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) of the ECA.

The specific objectives were:

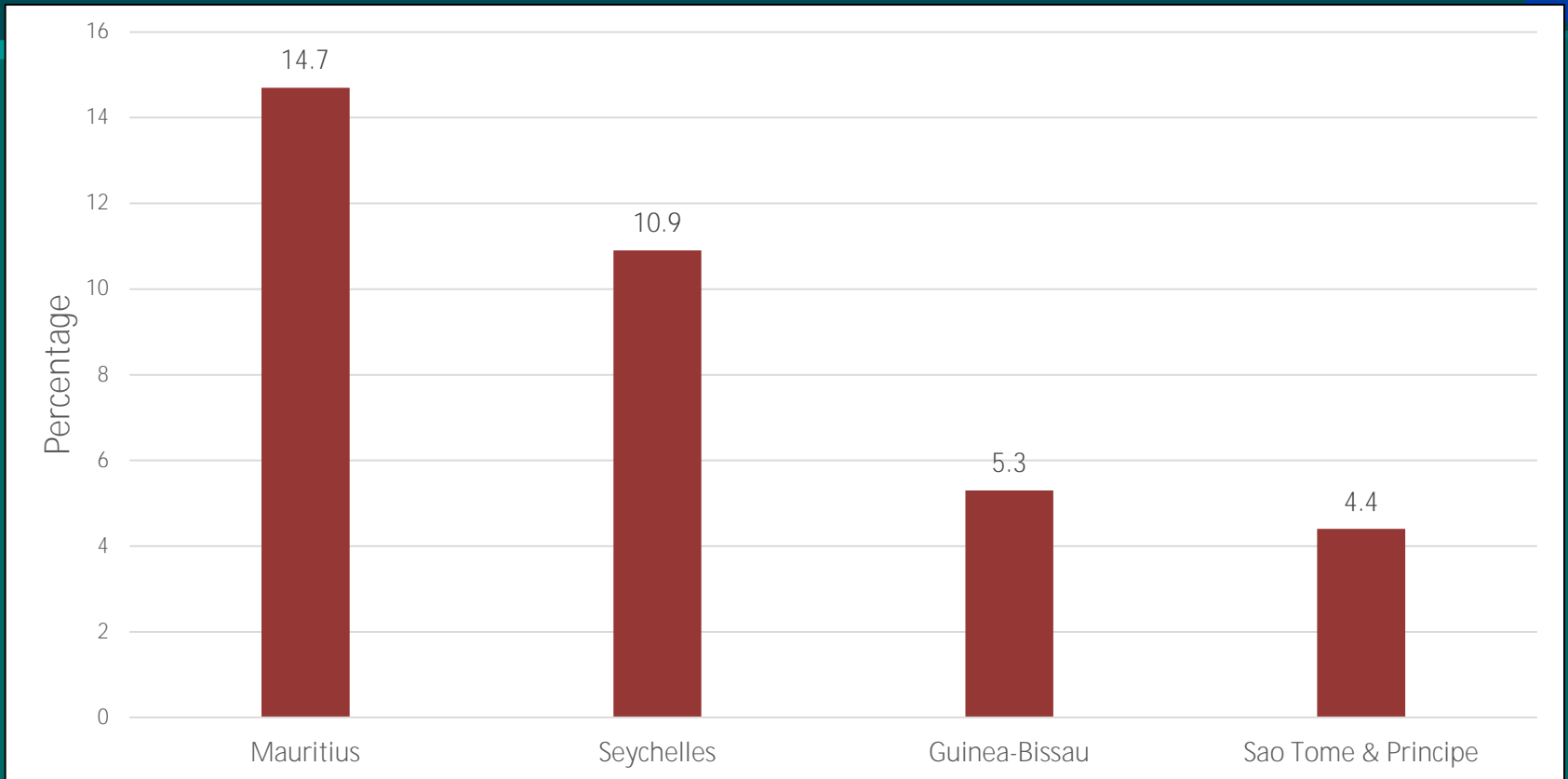
To assess the situation of older persons in SIDS and specifically in the areas of social and economic development, health and well-being, and enabling and supportive environment;

To identify and review policies, programmes and strategies that SIDS have put in place in addressing concerns of older persons, and

To document good practices and lessons learned that can inform policy formulation and implementation on ageing and development in both the SIDS and mainland states of Africa.



Figure 1: Percentage of Older Persons (60+ years) to Total Population in the Study Countries (2015)



Characteristics of Older Persons

According to Figure 1, the proportion of population aged 60+ years was highest in Mauritius (14.7%), followed by Seychelles (10.9%), Guinea-Bissau (5.3%), and Sao Tome and Principe (4.4%), respectively.

Evidence also suggests that the sex ratio of population aged 60+





Findings

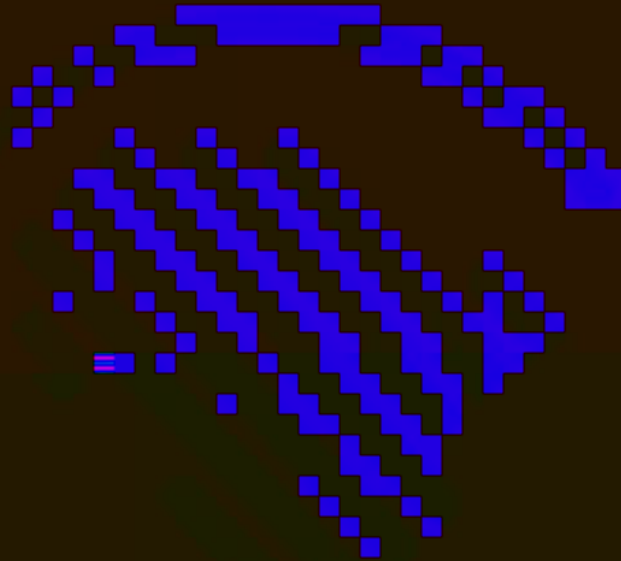
1: Older Persons and Development

Older people contribute to their families and societies in multiple ways as leaders, consumers, householders, workers, farmers, educators, primary carers, business people, health



Findings

2. Health



Findings

3. Enabling and supportive environment

An essential component of the well-being of older persons is their living conditions including housing and an enabling environment that is supportive to ageing.

The continuum of services/programmes to care for older people includes government social welfare services, old homes, community care and residential care.

Access to these differential levels of care depends on the needs for each individual and income levels. In most cases, those that can afford tend to use privately run (and better equipped) old homes or receive such services from professional care-givers in the comfort of their homes.

On the other hand, the indigent rely of government social welfare programmes, or are left at the mercy of their communities or their family members to provide such care.

The study identified varying levels of access to enabling and supportive services. Mauritius tended to have better organised systems to address issues of older persons compared to other SIDS.



Conclusions

Ageing in Africa, is happening during a relatively shorter period, and African countries are facing the simultaneous challenge of development and meeting the needs of rapidly increasing numbers of older persons.

There is a wide range

Policy Recommendations

