

Ageing and Development

News and analysis of issues affecting the lives of older people

Issue 22 August 2007



In South Africa, social protection measures including a social pension help women such as Thombile, who cares for nine orphaned grandchildren.

G8 supports social protection

The world's leading industrialised nations have expressed support for social protection as a development instrument and vowed to keep it on their development agenda.

G8 leaders described social protection as 'an investment in a country's economic future and a cost-effective way of fighting poverty' in their declaration on 'Growth and responsibility in the world economy' at the G8 summit in Heiligendamm, Germany in June 2007.

'We agree to keep this issue on our development policy agenda... In conjunction with economic growth and active labour market policies, social security is an instrument for sustainable social and economic development,' says the declaration.

The declaration reflects growing consensus by development partners, national governments, civil society and the UN that social protection, including social (non-contributory) pensions, is an effective way of

targeting aid at the poorest people and their dependants.

It incorporates recommendations made at a meeting of G8 labour and employment ministers in Dresden, Germany in May 2007. Ministers stated that the strengthening and broadening of social protection was one of the most important tasks in the context of globalisation. They committed to strengthen and broaden coverage of social protection, including old-age pensions and child benefits, as part of the International Labour Organization's Decent Work Agenda.

The UK's Department for International Development (DFID) has made social protection a priority in its five-year strategy. DFID's director of policy and research, Andrew Steer, said he was pleased to see the importance given by G8 labour and employment ministers to social protection in developing countries.

Speaking at the launch of the joint Help the Aged and HelpAge International Pensions not Poverty campaign in London in May, he remarked that social pensions could be a very effective poverty-reduction tool.

'One important concern is whether social pensions are affordable in poor countries,' he said. 'We believe they are a realistic option... Putting cash into the hands of older people could have a huge transforming power for all generations.'

G8 leaders, representing Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, UK and USA, will be asked to report on their progress on social protection at the next G8 meeting in Japan in July 2008.

More information:
G8 summit declaration
www.g-8.de/Webs/G8/EN/Homepage/home.html

Pensions campaign
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HelpAge International

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News round up

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Emma Judge/HelpAge International

Living on the edge

Lieza is one of many older women in Mozambique whose precarious situation is recognised in new UN recommendations.

She is a widow who lives with her daughter's two children. 'My daughter remarried after her first husband died,' she explains. 'She moved away but she left the children with me because her new husband refused to take them.'

Lieza works in her field each morning and comes home to cook the children lunch. She makes sure they go to school.

Lieza's daughter visits often and brings money, but not enough to feed the family. A village social fund supported by HelpAge International has given Lieza money and a new house. 'Before we were living in a rented house. The owners used to pester us a lot. Now I feel more secure,' she says.

Older women to be better protected in Mozambique

Older women in Mozambique stand to be better protected against witchcraft allegations and other forms of discrimination under new recommendations by the UN.

At the 38th session of the Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in New York in May 2007, Mozambique was one of the governments to report on progress in implementing the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women.

HelpAge International submitted evidence to CEDAW highlighting rights abuses of older women in Mozambique. Older women are more likely than older men to suffer violence and abuse, for example as a result of witchcraft accusations. They are also more

likely to be involved in caring for children and for sick adults.

The Committee recommended that the Mozambique government pay special attention to the precarious situation of older women to ensure their access to health and social services and to decision-making processes.

It urged the government to adopt special programmes to alleviate older women's poverty and combat all forms of discrimination against them. It also urged the government to challenge traditional views of older women,

particularly accusations of witchcraft, and to provide older women with identity cards free of charge so they can access their rights and entitlements.

The Mozambique government will disseminate the recommendations to ministries and MPs.

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CEDAW recommendations

www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw38/cc/Mozambique.pdf

UN proposes pension for all

All countries should consider developing a universal social pension, says a new UN report.

Launching the 2007 *World economic and social survey* in New York in June 2007, José Antonio Ocampo, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, said that by 2050 there would be 1.2 billion older people living without social security. Nations should consider developing a universal social pension equivalent to US\$1 a day, he said.

The *World economic and social survey* is published each year by

the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The theme of the 2007 report is 'Development in an ageing world', chosen to coincide with the fifth anniversary of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing.

Old-age pensions and other cash transfers have been a powerful instrument to reduce older people's poverty, says the survey. It concludes that a universal social pension equivalent to US\$1 a day seems to be

affordable, even in low-income countries.

It also points out that while financial sustainability is an important principle in designing a pension system, the ultimate goal should be to provide minimum economic security for all.

World economic and social survey: development in an ageing world

www.un.org/esa/policy/wess/wess2007files/wess2007.pdf

Comment

Challenging decisions in India

As the G8 summit agrees that social protection is a 'cost-effective way of fighting poverty', groups of older people in 900 rural communities across Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar

Pradesh are helping the poorest to gain access to the government old-age pension, food ration and shelter-building programme.

Although India has a wide-ranging social protection programme, bureaucracy and corruption mean that many eligible older people have been unable to claim their entitlements. The passivity with

which they have accepted this situation has been transformed, as HelpAge India and local NGO partners, funded by the UK Department for International Development, have supported older people's groups to challenge the decisions of local administrators.

Significant numbers of poor older people have now been added to

the rolls of the various social protection schemes. As important has been their growing self-confidence in holding government accountable. G8 leaders need to support local action to ensure that social protection policies actually do benefit the poorest.

Mark Gorman, Director of Policy Development, HelpAge International

Older Cambodians 'know less about AIDS'

Older men and women in Cambodia know considerably less about HIV and AIDS than younger adults, a new survey shows.

In Cambodia, older people play an important role in caring for people with HIV and AIDS. Adults who are sick often live with their parents. Older parents are the main carers of four in five adults with AIDS.

A survey in Banteay Meanchey province was commissioned by HelpAge International in early 2007 as part of a project funded by the Mercury Phoenix Trust to reduce the impact of HIV and AIDS on poor older carers.

Group discussions were held with young (unmarried), middle-aged and older people, with separate groups for men and women, to assess their knowledge of HIV and AIDS. Individual interviews were also carried out.

The group discussions revealed little difference between the level of knowledge of younger and older people. However, in individual interviews, older men and women, and younger women, displayed considerably less knowledge of

HIV and AIDS than other groups.

The survey found that older people had been actively ignored in HIV and AIDS education campaigns. They had been refused participation by NGOs because they were considered 'too old'.

The report calls for awareness campaigns to target older people. HelpAge International's work includes training peer educators to deliver accessible HIV prevention messages, and hosting a series of awareness-raising sessions for older people. Peer educators and other community volunteers also support older carers to access HIV and other services.

New survey analysis by John Knodel and colleagues at the University of Michigan, reported in the April 2007 issue of the *Asia-Pacific Population Journal*, also calls for older people to be incorporated into AIDS education campaigns in countries such as

Cambodia, where they play a critical role as carers.

The research team found that willingness to provide care to a family member increases with the level of correct knowledge.

The team links lack of AIDS knowledge to lower exposure to mass media. It suggests that one potentially effective route for the government and NGOs to improve AIDS knowledge among older Cambodians could be to facilitate ownership of radios or televisions.

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Asia-Pacific Population Journal, 22:1, April 2007
www.unescap.org/esid/psis/population/journal/2007/No1/vol22n1cover.asp

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Older Cambodians need to be included in AIDS education programmes.

HelpAge International

Globalisation and ageing study

Population ageing, urbanisation and globalisation are the focus of a new research project in southern India.

The project, led by Penny Vera-Sanso of the University of London, will look at how neoliberal policies have affected the ability of poor older people in Chennai to support themselves or receive support from their families.

Chennai is the fourth largest city in India, with more than five million residents. Economic growth has led to clearing public spaces of poor people, creating demand for supermarkets rather than street markets, and presenting different values in Tamil films. The 18-month study, starting in

October 2007, will look at factors determining active ageing and autonomy of poor older people before and after liberalisation.

It is funded by the New Dynamics of Ageing Research Programme through the UK Economic and Social Research Council. HelpAge International will assist with age-specific issues and dissemination.

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Non-contributory pensions research

A second comparative study of old-age wellbeing, poverty and public policy will be carried out in South Africa and Brazil.

The study, led by Armando Barrientos of the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex and Peter Lloyd-Sherlock of the School of Development Studies, University of East Anglia, builds on research in 2001-2003. By returning to the initial study group, it will explore the impact of the old-age pension on older people and their households over time.

Data will be collected from 1,000 households in each of the Western and Eastern Cape in South Africa, and Rio and Ilhéus in Brazil. It will

be used to examine how ageing affects income and inter-generational relationships in households with older people, and what social systems support active ageing.

The project is funded by the UK Economic and Social Research Council for three years starting in January 2008.

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News round up

Developments that affect older people's quality of life

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Age features in Africa health strategy



Katie Holt/HelpAge International

The new Africa health strategy calls for better services for vulnerable children and their older carers.

A new health strategy adopted by the African Union recognises the problems faced by older people.

The Africa Health Strategy 2007-2015 was adopted by African Union (AU) health ministers at their third annual conference in Johannesburg in April 2007. It aims to provide an overarching framework to enable coherence within and between countries, civil society and the international community.

The strategy refers to the 'alarming growth' of chronic diseases linked to demographic changes. It also recognises the role of older people as carers of orphans and vulnerable children.

Recommendations include:

A standard package of information reflecting gender and age and based on a minimum package of interventions should be collected to monitor and evaluate health system performance (paragraph 86).

In line with the Charter of the Rights of Children countries need to strengthen or develop

programmes to combat childhood illnesses, with particular emphasis on orphans and vulnerable children and their carers who in the case of AIDS orphans and vulnerable children are mainly older women caregivers (paragraph 94).

Data should be disaggregated by gender and age to enable more focussed action (paragraph 103).

These recommendations follow lobbying by HelpAge International and partners. The Kenyan Ministry of Health delegation included recommendations from HelpAge

International and HelpAge Kenya in its official response to the draft health strategy paper before and during the debate over its adoption at the conference. The South African deputy minister of health pushed for reference to older women carers of orphans and vulnerable children.

The strategy also calls for social protection for the vulnerable and a review of user fees with a view to abolishing them (section 4.1.2b).

AU member states are now committed to implementing the strategy, including ensuring that their respective national health policies reflect its recommendations. A role for civil society will be to work with the AU at regional level and with ministries of health at national level to turn the strategy into reality.

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Left behind in transition

A new research project will investigate the living conditions and sources of financial and social support for older people in the seven poorest countries of the former Soviet Union.

Much has been written about the impact of economic and social change on the population in the region during the 1990s. However, older people remain largely invisible in this literature, particularly those living in poorer countries.

The project, '*Left behind in transition*', will be carried out in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan by a team from the Centre for Research on Ageing, University of Southampton, led by Jane Falkingham and Maria Evandrou.

It will combine quantitative and qualitative methods to find out about the living conditions of older people, and poverty of different age groups in different countries. It will examine the role of the extended family in providing economic and social support to older people, and the role of older people in supporting their families, particularly grandchildren.

It will also review the effect of migration on social networks, and formal systems of social protection. It will identify older people's priorities and look at

how these can best be taken into account by policy makers and civil society.

The project starts in August 2007. It is funded for 18 months by the UK Department for International Development and the Economic and Social Research Council.

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Diary

The world's population reached 6.7 billion in July 2007 and will rise to 9.2 billion by 2050, according to the UN's *World population prospects: 2006 revision*. Half the increase – more than 1 billion – will be people aged 60 years or over.

www.un.org/esa/population/publications/wpp2006/wpp2006.htm

The public is being urged to 'click to change lives now' in a follow-up to the pre-G8 summit Pensions not Poverty campaign run by Help the Aged and HelpAge International. A petition calling on the UK government to put social pensions at the top of the international agenda will be delivered to the prime minister later this year.

www.changelivesnow.co.uk

A fledgling older people's organisation is making its voice

heard in Belize. Appropriately named VOICE, it has produced a report on its government's response to the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, with support from the National Council on Ageing and Global Action on Ageing. Like older people elsewhere, VOICE is calling for increased pensions, better health care, and inclusion of older people in society.

www.globalaging.org/agingwatch/events/ngos/GAA%20Organization%20Information%20Sheet.pdf

Despite increasing calls for palliative care to be recognised as a human right, half the countries in the world have no end-of-life care services. In most of those that do, services are patchy and not integrated into mainstream services. A survey commissioned by Help the Hospices and the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization in the UK presents a global overview.

www.nhpco.org/files/public/palliativecare/world_map_report_final-0107.pdf

Intergenerational approaches

Many development projects overlook the interdependence of different generations and are consequently less effective than they could be.

The value of taking an intergenerational approach to development is highlighted in the latest issue of *Ageways*, published by HelpAge International.

Many children and older people live in multigenerational households. These are often among the poorest families. In Africa, in particular, the AIDS epidemic has thrown younger and older generations together. In southern Africa, more than half of orphans live with their grandparents. Often these families receive little or no help to cope with the enormous emotional, economic and social consequences of AIDS.

With greater global mobility in recent years and the difficult economic situation many societies are seeing, particularly in Eastern Europe and Latin America, large numbers of the working-age population emigrate to seek work. They often leave children in the care of grandparents. In Moldova, for example, up to one-quarter of the working-age population has gone abroad for work. This has left nearly one-third of children living without one or both parents.

Conflicts around the world have also torn families apart and left many older people caring for children. About 30 per cent of

older people living in displaced people's camps in Darfur, Sudan are responsible for grandchildren or other young dependants.

Ageways shows that intergenerational approaches are particularly useful for:

- social cohesion – age awareness activities promote understanding and respect

- community development – all generations have a role; many people live in multigenerational households

- child and youth education – support of adults is necessary, including grandparents

- situations where grandparents are caring for children, for example, because of migration, conflict, or HIV and AIDS – these families face particular problems which need recognition and support.

It describes how HelpAge International is working with child-focused agencies in displaced people's camps in Darfur to help close divisions that have arisen between generations. It features the Grandmother Project, which promotes the inclusion of grandmothers in health and education projects for women and children.

It also describes grandparent and grandchildren's clubs in Moldova,

volunteering by young and old in Bosnia-Herzegovina, schools competitions in Tanzania, and psychosocial support to older carers and children in Tanzania and Mozambique.

Ageways 69:
Intergenerational approaches
HelpAge International, June 2007
Copies can be downloaded from:
www.helpage.org/resources/regularpublications



A club in Moldova brings older and younger generations together.

Maxim Ahmer/HelpAge International

New email newsletter

Would you like to receive more frequent updates on ageing and development issues by email?

We are launching an *A&D* eNewsletter containing news and analysis of issues affecting the lives of older people. It will be distributed every two months from August 2007.

We will also continue to publish *A&D* as an eight-page print publication twice a year.

Sign up for your copy of the *A&D* eNewsletter at: www.helpage.org

development agendas and be resourced accordingly at national and international levels

calls for the right of older people to an equal share of development resources

commits governments to secure the right to development for older people and to halve their poverty in line with MDG1

urges governments to include older people in national development and social policy processes (such as poverty reduction strategies and national development plans)

contains detailed advice and indicators on growing areas of concern for older people and their families, including poverty, HIV/AIDS, violence and abuse, access to health services, emergencies and conflict, and social protection

calls for effective partnerships of governments, civil society, international agencies and the private sector with older people and their organisations to achieve MIPAA's objectives.

Social security MIPAA recommends the promotion of programmes to enable all workers to acquire basic social protection, including, where applicable, pensions, disability and health

benefits. It calls for governments to consider the creation of non-contributory pensions and disability grants to ensure sufficient minimum income for all, particularly the most disadvantaged.

Health Objectives and recommendations include the development of policies to prevent ill-health in older persons, and the development of, and inclusion of older people in the process of developing strong primary healthcare services and home-based care services to meet the needs of older people.

Discrimination A key part of the accompanying political declaration to MIPAA reads: 'We commit ourselves to eliminate all forms of discrimination, including age discrimination.'

Human rights The full realisation of all human rights and fundamental freedoms is a central theme running through MIPAA.

HIV and AIDS Objectives include improved assessment of the impact of HIV and AIDS on older people through better data collection, adequate training, and social support to older people living with HIV and AIDS and their carers. MIPAA calls for better recognition of the contribution that older

people make to development and to the welfare of children, in their role as carers.

Emergencies MIPAA highlights the importance of equality of access to basic emergency services, and the need to protect older people's rights and assist them in situations of armed conflict. It also emphasises the contributions older people make to the reconstruction of communities following emergencies.

Gender The political declaration recognises the need to mainstream a gender perspective into all policies and programmes. MIPAA highlights discrimination against women throughout the life course. It points out that this, combined with age-based discrimination, for example over property, often leads to destitution and gender-based violence in old age.

Participation MIPAA calls for recognition of the contribution that older people make in all walks of life. It recommends specific actions to be taken by employers, voluntary organisations, civic authorities and education providers to ensure meaningful participation by older people, and participation of older people in decision-making processes at all levels.

How to implement MIPAA

Older citizens' reports from a range of countries on their governments' progress in implementing MIPAA all raise the need for better provision of linked social protection (healthcare, social care and social pensions), greater participation and more recognition of their rights.

Governments can:

- introduce a national plan of action on ageing that relates directly to national social and development policies, takes forward MIPAA recommendations and contributes to regional social development plans of action

- ensure that the national plan is incorporated into domestic policy and legislation with dedicated budgets

- include older people and ageing issues in national poverty reduction programmes and sectoral basic service programmes, for example in health, education and social security

- ensure that older people participate in the process of developing policies and programmes to make sure that these are suitable and older people benefit equitably from them.

Civil society organisations can:

- support older people to know the provisions of MIPAA

- support older people to know what services they are entitled to, and how to access them

- support older people to monitor access to services and lobby for improvements

- disseminate MIPAA's objectives and recommendations.

Age Demands Action campaign

The United Nations International Day of Older Persons on 1 October provides a key opportunity for older citizens to urge for MIPAA recommendations to be implemented in their own countries.

HelpAge International and partners' Age Demands Action campaign will support delegations of diverse older men and women to meet directly with their governments on and around the International Day of Older Persons in 2007.

Each delegation will be made up of three to six older people who will personify the issues most pressing in their country, such as a grandparent caring for orphans, or someone who has been excluded from work because of age discrimination.

The delegations, in at least 10 countries across four continents, will present specific requests to government representatives – for example, dedicated resourcing for social security for the over 60s, investment in an age-friendly health service, a legal service to help older people claim entitlements, or improved monitoring systems to ensure that their governments are working more closely with older people to deliver the MIPAA goals.

The delegations will ask for a commitment to meet again in no longer than a year to evaluate progress to meet these requests and MIPAA obligations.

The critical mass of simultaneous meetings is expected to generate national and international media coverage both before and after the meetings.

Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing

www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing

AU Policy Framework and Plan of Action on Ageing

www.helpage.org/resources/policyreports

Older citizens' MIPAA reports

These will be posted on:

www.helpage.org/researchandpolicy/madridinternationalplanofactiononageing

Resources

New articles and publications

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Journal articles

National

Aspects of ageing in Ukraine
Poniakina S, Bold, May 2007, pp 16-21

Demographic transition and ageing in Rajasthan, India
Asharaf S A, Bold, May 2007, pp 21-28

The socio-economic determinants of older people's health in Brazil: the importance of marital status and income
Bos A M and Bos A J, Ageing & Society 27:3, May 2007, pp 385-405

Social security, pensions and poverty

Changing the development policy paradigm: investing in social security floor for all

Cichon M and Hagemeyer K, Int. Soc. Sec. Review 60:2-3, April-September 2007, pp 169-196

Extending social security coverage: concepts, global trends and policy issues
Van Ginneken W, Int. Soc. Sec. Review 60:2-3, April-September 2007, pp 39-57

Pension reforms in urban China and Hong Kong
Yu W K, Ageing & Society 27:2, March 2007, pp 249-268

Elderly destitution in Ile-Ife community of Osun State, Nigeria
Fajemilehin B et al., Int. J. Nursing Practice 13:3, July 2007, pp 161-165

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Social inequalities in self reported health in early old age: follow-up of prospective cohort study
Chandola T et al., BMJ 334, April 2007

Changes in health outcomes among older husband caregivers: a one-year longitudinal study
Ducharme F et al., Int. J. Aging and Human Development 65:1, 2007, pp 73-96

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Grandparent-grandchild ties: reflections on continuity and change across three generations
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Children, AIDS and the politics of orphan care in Ethiopia: the extended family revisited
Abebe T and Aase A, Social Science & Medicine 64:10, May 2007, pp 2058-2069

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Knodel J et al., Asian Population Studies 3:1, March 2007, pp 57-78

Rural parents with urban children: social and economic implications of migration to the rural elderly in Thailand
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An inquiry into well-being and destitution of widows in Rajasthan
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www.internationalbudget.org/WidowsRajasthan.pdf

From red to gray: the 'third transition' of ageing populations in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union
Chawla M et al., World Bank, 2007
http://siteresources.worldbank.org/ECAEXT/Resources/publications/454763-1181939083693/full_report.pdf

Pension liabilities of the central government: projections and implications: is the Indian pension scheme not so unsustainable after all?
eSocialSciences, Mumbai, India, 2007
www.esocialsciences.com

Potential for micro-pensions to play a useful role in India's social security system
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Expanding the social security net in South Africa: opportunities, challenges and constraints
Pauw K and Mncube L, Country Study 8, International Poverty Centre Brazil, July 2007
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Pension systems in Latin America: concepts and measurements of coverage
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<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOCIALPROTECTION/Resources/SP-Discussion-papers/Pensions-DP/0616.pdf>

Responsible pensions in focus: how leading public pension funds are meeting the challenge
UNEP and UKSIF Sustainable Pensions Project, 2007
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Pension reform and poverty alleviation in Kosovo
Gubbels J et al., SP Discussion Paper 0707, World Bank, April 2007
<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOCIALPROTECTION/Resources/SP-Discussion-papers/Pensions-DP/0707.pdf>

Increased immigration or retraining of aged workers to maintain economic competitiveness
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Zimmer Z et al., Poverty, Gender, and Youth Working Paper no. 2, Population Council, New York, 2007
www.popcouncil.org/publications/wp/pgy/002.html

Social cash transfers for Asia
Report of a regional seminar on 'Ensuring social protection/social pensions in old age in the context of rapid ageing' in Bangkok in January 2007
HelpAge International, 2007
www.helpage.org/resources/policyreports

Establishing and working with older people's associations in Cambodia: a practical guideline
HelpAge International, 2006
www.helpage.org/resources/policyreports

Books

Intergenerational Support and Old Age in Africa
Aboderin I, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, 2006, 222 pp.
ISBN 978-0-7658-0339-9

Ageing in Singapore: Service Needs and the State
Teo P et al., Routledge, London, 2006
ISBN 978-0-415-37487-3

Ageing Societies: Myths, Challenges and Opportunities
Harper S, Hodder Arnold, London, 2006
ISBN 0-340-51756-5

HelpAge International has a vision of a world in which all older people fulfil their potential to lead dignified, healthy and secure lives. HelpAge International is a global network striving for the rights of disadvantaged older people to economic and physical security; healthcare and social services; and support in their caregiving role across the generations.

Ageing and Development aims to raise awareness of the contribution, needs and rights of older people and to promote the development of laws and policies supporting older people. It is published twice a year by HelpAge International, with funding from Help the Aged (UK).

Copies are available free of charge to policy makers, programme planners and researchers. Please use the order form at: www.helpage.org/resources/regularpublications. Alternatively, write to Publications, HelpAge International at the address below, or email: hai@helpage.org (giving the subject as 'publication order').

A&D is available as a pdf at: www.helpage.org/resources/regularpublications

A bi-monthly A&D eNewsletter is also available. Sign up at: www.helpage.org

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Help the Aged provides core funding to HelpAge International, and is also a leading partner of HelpAge International's global network of not-for-profit organisations.