

Ms Lorraine Healey
Civil Society Department
DFID
East Kilbride

01 August 2012

Dear Lorraine,

Management response to DFID Feedback on Annual Report 2011/12

We welcome DFID's feedback on HelpAge's PPA Annual Report for 2011/12 and the comments therein. We are happy that, overall, DFID felt it was a good report and we are particularly pleased with the positive comments on innovation, the work of the Resilience Learning Group and the additionality paper. We have a number of detailed comments which are listed below. However, we have two major concerns with the feedback

1. It is clear in the Evaluation Guidelines from Coffey that the second year IPR is expected to review progress on actions identified in this feedback¹. It is also clear that funding for the third year of the PPA is to some degree dependent on that progress. We find it difficult to identify specific actions to be pursued in the feedback. We have tried to pick those points out of the feedback and would welcome DFID's view as to whether this provides the 'improvement agenda' required.
2. At a number of points, we believe that DFID have criticised the report for failing to include material that was either not requested or for which there was insufficient space in the report template. This is particularly true with respect to comments on lack of evidence. In our opinion, it is the IPR that needs to assess the quality and body of evidence and to this end we have provided references to only some of the key evidence available and are providing a considerable body of material to the consultants carrying out the IPR.

In addition, we are concerned about a tendency not to fully acknowledge the unrestricted nature of the PPA funding. For example, requests to link unrestricted funding to specific outputs (as in DFID's comments on output 1) continue to be problematic. We would submit that the additionality paper is the mechanism by which we cast light on this issue.

¹ Evaluation Guidelines Annex 8

The contribution older women and men make to society – as carers, advisers, mediators, mentors and breadwinners – is invaluable. But growing older is not without its problems. HelpAge International helps older people claim their rights, challenge discrimination and overcome poverty, so that they can lead dignified, secure, active and healthy lives. Our work in over 40 countries is strengthened through our global network of like-minded organisations – the only one of its kind in the world.

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In respect of specific points raised in the feedback, please find our comments below. We have underlined those where we believe DFID would like to see more follow up over the coming year.

Revised logframe This will be delivered by 31 August as requested

Output 1 DFID notes that ‘it would have been useful if you had explained how PPA funding enabled these achievements...’. This explanation is, we believe, provided in the additionality paper, as mentioned above.

We accept the comment on the revised baselines. It has taken us some time to refine this data to our own satisfaction. However, should there be further changes we will notify DFID more promptly.

We accept and apologise for the reversal of indicators 1.2 and 1.3

Output 4 DFID questions the lack of evidence for the attribution of the ADA outcomes. Whilst we accept that this is a difficult question, we provided a reference to the external evaluation (which does reach that conclusion) in the evidence section and have supplied this document to the IPR consultants. As mentioned above, lack of space unfortunately precluded a more detailed discussion in the APR.

DFID has challenged our statement that we are an important contributor to the social protection debate. We will ask the IPR consultants to pass judgement on this.

We do not understand the comment about inserting dates in the final target column.

Results and VFM Please refer to comment under output 1 with respect to linking results to the reporting template.

DFID requests a full explanation of how numbers were calculated for outcome indicator 3. We have provided a brief explanation which was all that space allowed but can expand on this with the IPR consultants.

In relation to the leverage issue we accept that we could have explained more fully and will do so in next year’s APR. The evidence for the one example given would simply be the contract with Sida.

We accept the comment on the amount of information provided on feedback from beneficiaries and would again plead lack of space. We will address this with the IPR consultants.

We accept the comments on VFM. Whilst again noting the lack of space in the reporting template, we will request the IPR consultants to give particular attention to this issue

We accept the comments on relevance and will improve this area in next year's APR and also point the IPR consultants to the comment. We believe it would have been helpful if DFID had been more explicit that it required a separate listing of evidence in this section in addition to that provided under the output reporting

Learning	Taking the comments <i>in toto</i> we accept that we need to <u>provide more material in this area in next year's APR</u>
Additionality report and case studies	We accept that there could have been a closer connection between unrestricted allocations and overall strategy in the additionality paper and <u>will remedy this in next year's APR and in the IPR.</u>

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Blewitt', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Richard Blewitt

Chief Executive