

# Age-proofing the post-2015 development framework

**The HelpAge global network – formed by more than 100 Affiliates and 200 partners in over 60 countries – sets out five fundamental principles for a post-2015 development framework that address the rights, needs and aspirations of older people.**

The world is ageing at an unprecedented rate. Today, more people are over the age of 60 than children under five; by 2030, people aged over 60 will outnumber children under the age of 10.<sup>1</sup> The greatest numbers of older people, and the steepest increases of population ageing, are in lower- and middle-income countries.

Older age is a time of making significant contributions to society, the community and the family. It can also be a time of increased physical and mental illness, poverty, social isolation, discrimination and human rights abuses.<sup>2</sup>

The HelpAge global network believes that a post-2015 development framework that does not explicitly address the rights, needs and aspirations of older people cannot be considered legitimate nor will it be effective at tackling poverty.

The following fundamentals must be in place to make sure the global development framework beyond 2015 fully takes into account all age groups:

**1. Rights-based framework:** The global development framework beyond 2015 will be most effective for addressing the needs and aspirations of older people if it is rights-based. Human rights can help people live with dignity and free from discrimination at all stages of their life. Even so, new human rights legislation, such as a convention on the rights of older people, is necessary to clearly articulate these rights.

**2. Disaggregated data:** We must have the right information to make decisions about how to support people at any age. Very little information is gathered and analysed systematically by governments and UN agencies on older people. This makes it difficult to understand and monitor where poverty and vulnerability lie, and create appropriate interventions for older people. Disaggregated data (by age and gender) must, therefore, be the bedrock for any new framework.

**3. Healthy life expectancy:** As longevity increases across the globe, so does the amount of time people may be living with illness and disability. The new framework needs to make clear that one of our goals is to attain a long and healthy life. Measuring life expectancy from birth and from the age of 60 will set a clear international expectation that the health needs of older people also need to be addressed.

**4. Equality and non-discrimination:** Goals and target-setting have to incorporate the needs of people of all ages. A cross-cutting goal on equality and non-discrimination – with specific targets relevant for older people – would help ensure that older people are included across all goals and targets.

This statement follows from earlier HelpAge briefings on the post-2015 development agenda.

To read our briefings and learn about our work on the post-2015 development agenda, visit: [www.helpage.org/post-2015](http://www.helpage.org/post-2015)

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**5. Social protection floors:** Tackling poverty requires action at all levels of society. Older people are an important part of this response through their families and the community, and need greater support to contribute more effectively. There is agreement that guaranteeing a minimum level of healthcare and basic income security – social protection floors – are both necessary and possible for reducing poverty and inequality. This would help ensure that older people receive the support they need and are able to contribute more effectively to alleviating poverty.

Social protection floors have been endorsed by a wide range of international actors, including most UN institutions, the G20, the European Union, the OECD, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. It also has legal status, being officially adopted by 150 countries as an ILO Recommendation in June 2012.

### Notes and further reading

<sup>1</sup> Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, *World Population Prospects: The 2010 Revision*, <http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/index.htm>

<sup>2</sup> See UNFPA/HelpAge International, *Ageing in the Twenty-First Century: A Celebration and A Challenge*, New York/London, UNFPA/HelpAge International, 2012, [www.helpage.org/download/50af6e9c8f44b](http://www.helpage.org/download/50af6e9c8f44b)

Also see The World We Want, Post-2015 Thematic Consultations on population dynamics; inequalities; and health, [www.worldwewant2015.org](http://www.worldwewant2015.org)

**More than 100 Affiliates and 200 partners in over 60 countries  
form a global network standing up for the rights of older people.**

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