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Assessing the Impact of

HelpAge International’s

‘Linking Real Lives’ Project

An evaluation conducted by Health Poverty Action - 2013

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# Acronyms

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ADA | Age Demands Action |
| CSO | Civil Society Organisation |
| EC | European Commission |
| EDF | European Development Fund |
| EU | European Union |
| EY2012 | European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations |
| LRL | Linking Real Lives |
| MDG | Millennium Development Goal |
| MEP | Member of European Parliament |
| MIA | Make it Ageless |

# Executive Summary

HelpAge International helps older people claim their rights, challenge discrimination and overcome poverty, so that they can lead dignified, secure, active and healthy lives. Their work is strengthened through a global network of like-minded organisations. HelpAge’s strategy to 2015 has 5 global actions, including the building of global and local movements through the Age Demands Action (ADA) campaign that enable older men and women to challenge age discrimination and claim their rights.

The EU-funded “Linking Real Lives – Creating Solidarity with Older People in Developing Countries” project (April 2010 – June 2013) builds on the ADA campaign and aims to foster a better understanding amongst EU citizens of the issues faced by older people in developing countries, and to increase the capacity of partner organisations to mobilise citizens to take action. Linking Real Lives was a pilot for HelpAge in the UK and its global network, involving citizens of all ages including young people for the first time, and in its use of online media and films. These techniques, as well as more traditional face-to-face mobilisation, were used to engage people and encourage them to campaign for changes to EU development policy and national policies focused on older people.

The Linking Real Lives project worked in partnership with three EU-based organisations - Cordaid (Netherlands), Slovene Philanthropy (Slovenia) and Zivot 90 (Czech Republic), plus developing country partners HelpAge Kenya and HelpAge Sri Lanka. There were also sub-grantees in Europe: Age Action Ireland, and in developing countries: HelpAge Kyrgyzstan, HelpAge Mozambique, Coalition of Services of the Elderly (Philippines) and Muthande Society for the Aged (South Africa).

### This external final evaluation of the 3-year Linking Real Lives project was conducted by Health Poverty Action. After an introduction and methodological overview, the report assesses each objective (including impact on EU policy) and result in turn. Lessons learned and recommendations are then summarised, and the report culminates with an overall conclusion. A range of methodology was used, to triangulate data and to ensure that all aspects of the project were considered.

The Linking Real Lives project has had some major achievements, especially considering the innovative nature of the methods and that these were new for the HelpAge network. The project attained new political engagement at the European level, with the active involvement of 15 MEPs and strong evidence that HelpAge influenced an important European Parliament report and EC Communication on the Millennium Development Goals and the post-2015 framework. Overall, the project has made an important contribution to advocacy and awareness raising on older people and ageing issues. Partners’ capacity has been built in film making, and the resultant videos provided an engaging communication channel between European and Kenyan older people, which have reached a large audience. The interesting development of engaging young people in ADA campaign through the ‘Make it Ageless’ slogan could be developed further in the future, and a huge number of people were reached with the campaign.

The project met almost all its result targets and the ADA activities clearly contributed to positive policy changes in a number of countries. There were some challenges, many of which relate to project design - confusion about the project’s objectives and between various elements of the project, as well as capacity constraints which could have been better foreseen.

The logframe text differed from the proposal, so the overall measure of the project – and the approach taken in this evaluation – was that included in the proposal: “to contribute to improving EU development policy and practice and MDG processes so that they are more responsive to the needs of older people in developing countries.” The specific objective was to, “create active awareness amongst the EU public and MEPs of the issues older people in developing countries face and their unrecognised contribution to reducing poverty in their communities.” Stated results are: (1) An increased capacity amongst partners and sub-granted target groups to creatively present the authentic voice of older people and the issues they face; (2) An increased capacity amongst EU partners and sub-granted target groups to engage public audiences with the positive contribution older people in developing countries make to poverty reduction; (3) A direct two-way engagement between older people in Kenya and EU citizens online and in 3 EU countries is enabled; and (4) An intergenerational constituency of public support established in Europe, lobbying MEPs in solidarity with older people in developing countries.

The overall objective indicator noted in the logframe (focusing on EDF guidelines and Country Strategy Papers) was not met, as the policy environment changed during the course of the project - the last year of the project instead focused on the post-2015 framework. However, the project enabled a clear advocacy strategy and targets to be developed, including positioning HelpAge more strategically – enabling key MEPs in partner countries to be targeted both at a national level (through partners) and at EU level through HelpAge’s Brussels office. The lobbying of MEPs by supporters was dropped from the project due to the unavailability of appropriate software and replaced with a petition. A European Parliament report on the Millennium Development Goals post-2015 framework, which included reference to older people, was rapporteured by Filip Kaczmarek MEP, who was engaged with the project. Although there will be other factors, this suggests that it is highly likely that HelpAge’s work has contributed to the inclusion of this reference. Further reference to ageing within an EC Communication may also have been influenced by the project.

Unfortunately progress towards the specific objective’s indicator (“create active awareness amongst the EU public and MEPs of the issues older people in developing countries face and their unrecognised contribution to reducing poverty in their communities”) and target (“5000 EU citizens of all ages lobby their MEPs on 1 October to support older people's right to be recognised in EU development strategies”) lacks clarity because of the change in project approach. Nevertheless, a large amount of awareness raising was achieved; a small but significant number of MEPs were engaged; and over 35,000 EU citizens took part in campaign activity (the revised approach to the target discussed with HelpAge). Therefore the specific objective can be taken as met.

Looking at result 1, targets were all met and there was increased capacity of partners and sub-grantees (both staff skills and the provision of equipment) to creatively present the authentic voice of older people, with campaign updates, activist profiles and solidarity messages being posted online and organisations expressing confidence in their new ability. The project succeeded in training organisations in six countries and equipping those in ten countries to use video cameras to record the experiences of older people. Filming of older people was generally easier in developing countries, as many in the EU countries were reticent to get involved. The films produced were engaging, portraying older people well. In addition, a substantial number of ADA activities and events were conducted in sub-grantee countries, contributing to promises of developing/improving specific laws to protect older people’s rights (Kyrgyzstan, Mozambique), establishment of National Council/Parliament of older people (Mozambique, South Africa) and pension increases (Sri Lanka).

The indicator targets for result 2 – increased capacity to engage public audiences with the positive contribution of older people in developing countries – were clearly met: 467 pieces of media coverage were produced, which is a large amount and a very good achievement, and HelpAge estimates that more than 11 million people became aware of Make it Ageless/Age Demands Action campaign, which is a vast reach. Make it Ageless (adapted from the original ‘What if’ message contained in the proposal) was targeted at young people, but the differences between MIA, ADA global, and ADA in Europe were blurred and caused considerable confusion amongst partners and sub-grantees during the course of the project. A range of MIA/ADA activities were undertaken in partner EU countries, including dinner-dialogue meetings, festivals and meetings, and older and younger activists were recruited. As well as the project using traditional media, the MIA slogan in particular was pushed through social media to reach a new and younger audience.

Implementation of result 3 – direct two-way engagement between older people in Kenya and EU citizens – succeeded in the production of 14 films by Kenya, 32 campaign updates from the EU, and 9 messages of support from younger people. The majority of older people appreciated the opportunity to learn about the lives of older people in other countries. The filmed ‘conversations’ between activists generally worked well, as they showed the interaction between the two cultures, gave an insight into the different lives of older people around the world, and made an engaging piece of digital communication. The films also provided a good, personal introduction into the lives of older people in Kenya and received an impressive 892 online views. This is very high, compared to other NGO films benchmarked, and shows the success of the approaches HelpAge took to publicising these films. Comments posted on the website show that they succeeded in raising awareness and empathy.

Under result 4, 9,270 people (across the generations, from a very wide range of countries) signed a petition asking for the EU to include older people in their development policies, and this was referenced in a number of HelpAge’s communications. **Given the complexity of the issue, the best results were when the petition was explained at events, rather than relying on the website.** ADA activities on 1 October were funded in the three EU partner countries, including solidarity fun runs, festivals of the third age and an international conference, with more than 25,800 activists involved. Slovene Philanthropy succeeded in contributing to ageing being mentioned as a key development priority of a particular national government policy. An international ADA meeting in Brussels, involving activists and hosted by a number of MEPs, also succeeded in raising some awareness. Feedback suggests that listening to the direct experiences of ‘an older person from a developing country was very positive’ and helped to bring a sense of reality to the issues and how they impact on people’s lives.

Partner organisations appreciated the support received from HelpAge International, but there appears to have been some difficulties with consistent participation from partners, partly due to capacity constraints and individual organisation priorities. The project adapted well to issues that arose in the course of implementation.

It is highly likely that the project has contributed to the inclusion of older people in the European Parliament’s report on the MDG post-2015 framework, and may have also influenced an EC Communication, so it could be argued the project’s cost of just over Euro 615,770 offers good value for money, given that a very large number of older people that will be affected if the EU takes this report as the basis for future development policy[[1]](#footnote-1).

As shown in a previous evaluation, ADA activities offer excellent value for money, particularly in developing countries (recognising that ADA was new for EU countries with this project). Euro 31,518 spent in six developing countries contributed to: the development / improvement of specific laws to protect older people’s rights in Kyrgyzstan and Mozambique; the establishment of a National Council / Parliament of older people in Mozambique and South Africa; pension increases in Sri Lanka; and veterans able to access health services without payment in Kenya. In Europe, an average Euro 3,675 was spent per country per year, which succeeded in engaging 15 MEPs (also influenced by other budget lines) and in ageing being mentioned as a key development priority in a particular national government policy in Slovenia.

Assuming that active participation – in the form of either petition signing or activism – is the preferred achievement, it can be calculated that the project spent around Euro 10 per petition signer and Euro 3.75 per activist recruited. Even with the intrinsic double-counting, these two figures compare extremely favourably to the Euro 145 (£120) it costs to recruit an Age UK supporter (sister organisation to HelpAge International).

In terms of the project’s reach, an enormous 11 million EU citizens (indeed more than this) were made aware of the ADA/ Make it Ageless campaign, which can be costed at Euro 0.016 per person made aware, i.e. extremely good value for money. Euro 109,558 was spent on training six and supplying equipment to ten organisations for film production. The films developed to facilitate communication between older people in Kenya and in three EU countries cost an average of Euro 3,529 each, involved an estimated 40 older people, and reached an impressive wider audience of around 50,000 people.

Overall, Linking Real Lives was a pilot for HelpAge in the UK and its global network, and makes a significant, innovative contribution to advocacy and awareness raising on older people and ageing issues. In particular the level of engagement at the European level is new, and it can be strongly argued to have influenced important policy documents; the videos allowed a shared communication and understanding to develop between European and Kenyan older people, with an impressively large wider audience engaged; and the Make it Ageless website and other activities engaged a younger audience with ageing issues for the first time.

Key recommendations include the need for greater clarity and to avoid confusion in some areas – for example using terminology consistently and ensuring uniformity between the proposal and logframe. Project design could have been strengthened to avoid some problems, such as lack of partner capacity: if this had been identified at planning stage extra support could have been incorporated within the project. Successes to consider building on in future include working with media, where large-scale visibility could be turned into deeper engagement with journalists; working with young people; and social media, both of which have proven successful avenues for HelpAge to work in.

Looking forward, the project has laid some important strategic foundations. There is now a basis for HelpAge to engage strategically with European parliamentarians, with a focus on those from relevant committees. Although there is a high turnover of MEPs (European elections are planned for 2014) and a change in Commission staff every five years, this presents a good striking point for the organisation. Partner organisations – particularly in developing countries, where older people appeared more comfortable in being filmed – now have greater technical capacity and the necessary equipment to continue producing engaging campaign films in the future. The project’s support for in-country ADA activities appears a cost effective way of contributing to national policy change. It is therefore hoped that this could continue.

Linking Real Lives has had many achievements of which HelpAge should be proud as it looks to put ageing higher up the political agenda in the post-2015 debate.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Help Age International

HelpAge International helps older people claim their rights, challenge discrimination and overcome poverty, so that they can lead dignified, secure, active and healthy lives. Their work is strengthened through a global network of like-minded organisations. HelpAge’s strategy to 2015 has 5 global actions, including the building of global and local movements through the Age Demands Action (ADA) campaign that enable older men and women to challenge age discrimination and claim their rights. Core to the ADA campaign is meetings between delegations of older women and men and their governments. 1 October is the UN International Day of Older People and is the key day of activism: many campaigns mobilise the public through awareness raising and celebration, and in recent years there has been increased participation of young people (ages 18-30).

## 1.2 The Project

The EU-funded “Linking Real Lives – Creating Solidarity with Older People in Developing Countries” project (April 2010 – June 2013[[2]](#footnote-2)) builds on the ADA campaign and aims to foster a better understanding amongst EU citizens of the issues faced by older people in developing countries, and to increase the capacity of partner organisations to mobilize citizens to take action. The focus is on ‘linking lives’ and building connections between activists in Europe and those in developing countries through the Age Demands Action campaign. Video messages from older people involved in ADA are shared with targeted audiences in the EU. The messages profile older activists taking part in the campaign and the issues they are facing and seeking to address. As a response, EU citizens produce their own video messages of support and solidarity with their counterparts in developing countries. Commonalities between the lives of older people in developing countries and the EU are emphasised by including a common set of open questions in all video interviewees, which explore people’s hopes, dreams, pride and personalities. “In this way the lives of EU citizens are linked directly with the lives of older people in developing countries as they exchange messages built around a shared experience and campaign together on 1 October” (ToR). In addition, EU older and younger people under the banner of Age Demands Action lobby their MEPs to influence the EC to support older people in developing countries. Communication and media capacity-building on portraying older people and engaging audiences was also provided to partners and sub-grantees.

The Linking Real Lives (LRL) project worked with three EU-based organisations: Cordaid (Netherlands), Slovene Philanthropy (Slovenia) and Zivot 90 (Czech Republic). It also worked in partnership with HelpAge Kenya and HelpAge Sri Lanka as well as five sub-grantees: Age Action Ireland, HelpAge Kyrgyzstan, HelpAge Mozambique, Coalition of Services for the Elderly (Philippines) and Muthande Society for the Aged (South Africa).

### Overall Objective

Stated in the Logframe:

*Support to actions in the EU and acceding countries aiming at raising public awareness of development issues and promoting education for development, to mobilise greater support for actions against poverty and for fairer relations between developed and developing countries and to change attitudes to the issues and difficulties developing countries and their peoples are facing.*

Stated in the Proposal Text:

*To contribute to improving EU development policy and practice and MDG processes so that they are more responsive to the needs of older people in developing countries.*

The logframe’s overall objective is a description of the project’s awareness-raising activities, whilst the proposal’s overall objective is more focused and describes the project’s end goal of policy change. However, the indicator included in the logframe focuses on policy change, rather than awareness raising. This inconsistency is obviously confusing, but it is felt that the overall measure of the project – and the approach taken in this evaluation – is the degree to which policy change was achieved. In this respect, the report evaluates against the proposal’s text and the logframe’s indicator for the overall objective.

### Specific Objective

Create active awareness amongst the EU public and MEPs of the issues older people in developing countries face and their unrecognised contribution to reducing poverty in their communities.

### Results

1. An increased capacity amongst partners and sub-granted target groups to creatively present the authentic voice of older people and the issues they face.
2. An increased capacity amongst EU partners and sub-granted target groups to engage public audiences with the positive contribution older people in developing countries make to poverty reduction.
3. A direct two-way engagement between older people in Kenya and EU citizens online and in 3 EU countries is enabled.
4. An intergenerational constituency of public support established in Europe, lobbying MEPs in solidarity with older people in developing countries

### Target Groups

* 40,000 older people in the Czech Republic, Netherlands and Slovenia
* 54 older activist organisers recruited through EU partner public outreach channels in Netherlands, Czech Republic and Slovenia
* Younger EU citizens specifically 18-30 year olds online
* 785 MEPs
* Media in the Czech Republic, Netherlands and Slovenia and international media consumed in the EU
* 1 Irish CSO requiring capacity building in development awareness-raising
* 4 developing country CSOs requiring capacity building in producing development awareness video materials

## 1.3 Final Evaluation

This external final evaluation of the 3-year project was conducted by Health Poverty Action[[3]](#footnote-3) (an overview of the team can be found in the annex).

After an introduction and methodological overview, the report assesses each objective (including impact on EU policy) and result in turn. Lessons learned and recommendations are then summarised, and the report culminates with an overall conclusion.

## 1.4 Objectives

In the line with the Terms of Reference (see annex), “The primary purpose of the evaluation is to assess the impact of the project and the level of achievement of the project’s objectives and results... A secondary purpose would be to identify any emerging good practices or approaches and lessons learnt in the project that can be documented and showcased for possible replication in future advocacy work.”

The report is therefore structured along the lines of the project’s objectives and results, and uses this structure to:

* Assess the extent to which the campaign has raised awareness and fostered understanding in Europe about the issues facing older people in developing countries.
* Assess the extent to which the campaign has mobilised EU citizens to engage in advocacy to support older people in developing countries.
* Assess the extent solidarity has been built for older people in developing countries amongst European youth and EU decision makers.
* Evaluate the capacity among partners and sub-grantees to creatively present the authentic voice of older people and the issues they face, while at the same time increasing their capacity to target and engage public audiences regarding the positive contribution of older people in developing countries in regards to poverty reduction.
* Understand the strengths of the two-way relationship between older people in Kenya and the EU.
* Examine the extent of any related policy changes (particularly EC) and the contribution of the campaign to these changes.

The EU areas of evaluation (relevance; impact; effectiveness; equity & accountability; sustainability; partnerships; accountability; value for money; lessons learned & recommendations) are kept in mind throughout, and in particular a section is devoted to the project’s value for money.

Finally, emerging good practices and lessons learnt from the project are drawn out throughout the report and collected together at the end.

## 1.5 Methodology

A range of methods were used (see Annex for matrix), to triangulate data and to ensure that all aspects of the project were considered. Methods included: final lesson learnt workshop with partners, literature review, policy mapping, online survey of young people involved in the target EU countries (15 responses), postal survey of older people involved in the target EU countries (24 responses), 13 key informant interviews with HelpAge International and partner/sub-grantee staff, key informant interviews with one MEP, face-to-face interviews with seven older people in Kenya, simple scalar assessment capacity tools for the eight partners/sub-grantees, analysis of selected nine campaign videos and value for money analysis.

## 1.6 Limitations

A number of limitations to this evaluation should be noted:

* The evaluation was planned for over the summer months of July/August, which coincided with numerous stakeholders being unavailable. This meant that the whole process took much longer than originally expected.
* The formatting of the young people’s survey (undertaken by partners) and the limited responses received, meant that we were unable to analyse the perceptions of younger people towards older people in the EU and developing countries, and hence unable to compare these attitudes with the results of the survey undertaken as part of the initial ‘What If...’ research.
* 1 MEP agreed to be interviewed. This should be seen as an achievement, as politicians don’t often prioritise civil society, but is also a limitation, as feedback from only one politician was possible.
* The response rate for all the surveys (young people, older people, and online petition-signers) was generally low, with marked country variations[[4]](#footnote-4). A number of possible reasons for this was given:
  + Over 33% of the petition-signers’ emails bounced back. This could be because: “people did not put their true email down; the petition has been running for 3 years and some people could have changed providers or students moved out of school.”
  + Slovenia: “It could be that some older people don’t remember the project from 2-3 years ago. It could also be that some do not know how to fill out the form.”
  + Netherlands: “We did not collect addresses [of older people] specifically. I do not have many email addresses of younger people (only 6 contact/institutional addresses via which we got in touch with some youth volunteers).”

## 1.7 Linking Real Lives, Age Demands Action & Make it Ageless

A short introduction to ‘Linking Real Lives’, ‘Age Demands Action’ and ‘Make it Ageless’, is presented here, as there has been significant confusion between the three aspects, both internally (within HelpAge and its offices) and externally (with HelpAge Affiliates). HelpAge attempted to overcome this confusion during the course of the project, including setting-up weekly Skype calls with EU partners, and thought that the confusion had been cleared-up - they were unaware that confusion still existed until this evaluation began.

### Linking Real Lives

The project combines four strands, which all focus on older people in developing countries, but with varying degrees of connectedness:

* Solidarity – between older people in EU countries and Kenya, through the exchange of video messages
* Intergenerational support – through Make it Ageless
* Lobbying the EU - to increase their support to older people in developing countries, including Age Demands Action events in four EU countries (partners: Czech Republic, Netherlands, Slovenia; sub-grantee: Ireland)
* Capacity-building – of partner and sub-grantees, on media and communication

***Age Demands Action***

Globally, Age Demands Action refers to calls for national policy changes and events on 1 October (UN International Day of Older Persons), along with the campaign for a UN Convention on the Rights of Older People. Older people are heavily involved throughout the campaign process.

During the Linking Real Lives project, and only within Europe, activities associated with lobbying the EU to increase their support to older people in developing countries were captured under the ADA campaign. Also during Linking Real Lives the slogan ‘Make it Ageless’ was used when targeting young people to get involved in ADA, to engage this new audience without creating a new brand or separate campaign. Older people in Europe were not exposed to this slogan.

***Make it Ageless***

The ‘Make it Ageless’ slogan was created following research and testing amongst young people, and refers specifically to a set of awareness raising activities which target young people to show solidarity with older people in developing countries and advocate for changes in EU policy. However some of the partners continued to express confusion during this evaluation about whether it was a separate campaign.

**Recommendation 1:** Ensure that terminology used elsewhere within HelpAge to mean one thing (e.g. ADA, calling for a UN Convention on the Rights of Older People), is not used to mean a different thing in one specific project (e.g. ADA, calling for the EU to increase its support to older people in developing countries), to avoid confusion.

**Recommendation 2:** Restrict each project to just one campaign and slogan, to increase clarity.

# 2. Findings

## 2.1 Achievements against logframe

Considering the indicators and targets noted in the logframe, the project achieved the following successes. These are discussed in detail in subsequent sections.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **No.** | **Indicator & Target** | **Achievement** |
| Overall  Objective | 1 | The EU European Development Fund (EDF) guidelines recommend the mainstreaming of older people’s issues into Country and Regional Strategy Papers | Unachievable, due to circumstances beyond HelpAge’s control |
| Specific  Objective | 1 | 5000 EU citizens of all ages lobby their MEPs on 1 October to support older people's right to be recognised in EU development strategies | If taken to include EU petition signatories and European ADA campaigners (see discussion under 2.3 below), over 35,000 EU citizens campaigned to support older people's right to be recognised in EU development strategies |
| Result 1 | 1.1 | 18 Age Demands Action campaign updates and activist profiles (Sri Lanka project partner and 5 sub-grantees) | 53 campaign updates were produced: 20 written updates were produced, plus 14 videos and 19 activist profiles |
|  | 1.2 | 30 Age Demands Action video messages of solidarity posted online by project partners and sub-grantees or around 1 October (1 brief video message uploaded in each project year by 3 EU partners, 1 EU sub-grantee, 2 developing country partners and 4 developing country sub-grantees) | 37 ADA video messages were produced: 31 ADA video messages of solidarity posted online. In addition, as explained in section 2.4 below, some countries produced blogs in year 1 instead of video messages. Thus 6 blogs can be counted towards this indicator. |
| Result 2 | 2.1 | Media coverage from EU regional and EU partner national media raising awareness of the contribution older people make to poverty reduction | 467 pieces of media coverage were produced overall. This certainly meets the target to generate media coverage, and can be seen as an excellent achievement. |
|  | 2.2 | Up to 40,000 people made aware of ‘What if’ [which became ‘Make it Ageless’] materials and Age Demands Action either through EU partner countries or online. | Estimated more than 11 million people made aware, including:  ...Google AdWords for Make It Ageless received 1,052 clicks to the website  ...Make It Ageless web pages (www.makeitageless.org) received 10,500 views  ...Facebook ads received more than 3,600 clicks  ...Netherlands: estimate 2,570 reached  ...Slovenia: estimate 14,000 reached  ...Czech Republic: estimate 6,800 reached  ...5,000 plus (evaluation estimate) for the Make it Ageless & ADA pages of the HelpAge website  ...1311 views of MIA campaign video on YouTube (221) and Vimeo (1090)  ...Facebook ads reached 2.3 million citizens  ...Media coverage |
| Result 3 | 3.1 | 9 Age Demands Action video messages and activist profiles produced from Kenya Age Demands to activists in EU activists online and in EU partner ADA groups | 14 messages were produced by Kenyan activists (9 initial films, followed by 5 responses to the European reactions) |
|  | 3.2 | 18 Age Demands Action campaign updates and activist profiles sent to Kenya Age Demands Action group from 3 EU partner countries (2 for each EU partner country in each project year) | 55 ADA campaign updates were produced: 32 campaign updates and 23 activist profiles were sent from the EU to Kenya |
|  | 3.3 | 3 messages of support which have been posted by younger EU citizens online are translated and shared with Kenya Age Demands Activists | 9 messages of support were posted by younger EU citizens |
| Result 4 | 4.1 | 10,000 signatures of Age Demands Action global pledge [changed to the EU petition], at least 1/3 of which will be from people aged between 18 and 30 | 9,270 people signed the EU petitions, of which around one third were aged 18-30 years |
|  | 4.2 | 12 Age Demands Action events (1 in event on 1 October in each year of the action in 3 EU partner countries and 1 sub-grantee country – Ireland) | Over the 3 years, more than 12 ADA events (involving a number of activities) were held across the 3 EU partner countries & 1 EU sub-grantee country. Many of these took place on and around 1 October. |
|  | 4.3 | 1 international Age Demands Action delegation meeting of MEPs in Brussels in Year 3 | International meeting with MEPs took place in Brussels on 4th October 2012 |

## 2.2 Overall Objective

Proposal Text:

*“To contribute to improving EU development policy and practice and MDG processes so that they are more responsive to the needs of older people in developing countries.”*

The indicator for the overall objective was not met, as it became irrelevant following a change in the policy environment during the course of the project (which culminated in the European Development Fund (EDF)[[5]](#footnote-5) guidelines not being reviewed and Country Strategy Papers not being developed for all countries). Following this change in policy context the indicator was not updated, however the project’s impact on other policies is discussed below.

As discussed above (section 1.2), the inconsistency, between the log frame’s stated overall objective on raising public awareness (but with an indicator that refers to policy change), and the proposal’s stated focus on changing policies, is likely to have caused some difficulties in determining the overall focus of the project and hence the monitoring and direction of implementation

**Recommendation 3:** Ensure that the proposal and log frame texts are consistent, to ensure agreement on the project’s overall goal and direction and hence effective implementation.

### 2.2.1 Influencing Policy

The proposal narrative focuses on a policy call to amend the EU Programming Orientation guidelines for the EDF in order that the needs of older people are mainstreamed in the analysis of all Country and Regional Strategy Papers.

During the course of the project, the policy environment changed and the focus of the project’s policy asks were amended. The advocacy strategy developed by HelpAge International’s Brussels (EU) office stated, *“Longer term we are aiming to build up greater awareness of older people and ageing in development amongst key EU policy and decision-makers. This would mean that national politicians and MEPs as well as institution officials will be building in appropriate references to their reports, documents and discussions proactively as well as in collaboration with us.”*

Advocacy Strategy

The advocacy strategy, developed at the end of year 1, represented HelpAge’s earlier assessment of objectives and targets, and was recognised by staff as being quite ambitious. However, the strategy wasn’t updated following the change in policy context and so would have become less useful as the project progressed.

The strategy identified two specific opportunities to effect policy change. Whilst neither explicit target was achieved (see below table for details of change in external political environment) the individual tactics were generally successful.

*Opportunities for Policy Change*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Opportunity** | **Outcome** |
| Influencing the development of a ‘modernised EU development policy’ by the Commissioner for Development (Andris Piebalgs) by pushing for the inclusion of references to ageing and older people as a vulnerable group in the Communication | HelpAge responded to the EU’s Green Paper consultation, focusing on ageing and social protection. However, although the final Communication, *‘Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change’*, mentioned social protection, there was no reference to ageing. The Council Conclusions on this communication were adopted by the member states in May 2012 and supported the focus on social protection with reference to the need to ‘focus on poor and vulnerable groups’, but again there was no specific reference to older people. |
| Influencing the negotiations and planning for the design and programming of the external financing instruments, including in particular the European Development Fund (EDF), which supports some of the EU’s MDG work | This proved impossible through factors beyond HelpAge’s control:   * The programming guidelines for the EDF were produced 18 months earlier than expected, with a decision made not to review them[[6]](#footnote-6) * There were no separate guidelines for the EDF, but common guidelines across EDF and Development Co-operation Instrument (DCI) countries * The Agenda for Change communication outlined important new principles in EU development support, including the decision not to develop Country Strategy Papers in countries where a suitable national development plan already exists or where joint programming is taking place * The EU process had been kept deliberately very internal, with no opportunity for civil society or MEPs to input or influence the content of any documents. |

*Advocacy Tactics*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Tactic** | **Achievement** |
| Identifying at least one political champion per EU partner country that would be able to actively engage in the Linking Real Lives project | This was achieved. Good relationships were developed with at least one MEP in each EU partner country. These relationships were also strategic, with MEPs members of relevant committees or Intergroups e.g. DEVE Committee, Intergroup on Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity, or part of the Delegation to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly.  The project succeeded in engaging 15 MEPs and building solid relations with five of them, who took part in activities such as: giving a supportive statement for the website, tabling parliamentary questions and signing letters. |
| Targeting the Council of Ministers through Development or Foreign Affairs Ministers, and through partners in Kenya, Mozambique and South Africa to lobby government representatives on the ACP-EU JPA | Slovenia’s President and Deputy Prime Minister / Foreign Minister both expressed their support for the campaign. The Irish Minister for Overseas Aid gave a keynote speech at an Ageing & Development International Conference, organised by the partner organisation.  With the exception of perhaps one approach in Mozambique, it does not appear that ACP-EU JPA focused lobbying by African partners took place. |
| Targeting the petition at the President of the European Council and Council Ministers as well as placing on the agenda of key EU decision-makers, including the President of the Commission, the President of the Parliament and the High Representative of Foreign Affairs and Security Policy | The petition was promoted in communications to politicians and at events (see section 2.7), but was not sent to target individuals. |
| Using media and activists to influence MEPs | Media was used (see section 2.5) to raise awareness on a general level. Activists targeted MEPs at the event in Brussels in 2012 and signed the petition (see section 2.7). |
| Lobbying MEPs to put pressure on the Commissioner | Following HelpAge’s EY2012: Call for Action document (see below), eight MEPs wrote to European Commissioner Piebalgs highlighting the petition and expressing support for the project |
| EU office complementing national level advocacy of the Council through targeting the Permanent Representations | This does not appear to have taken place |

*Change in Advocacy Objective*

Given the obstacles faced, it was decided that the last year of the project focus would change to the Post-2015 framework, rather than the original policy asks, and complement HelpAge’s wider work on post-2015. The key post-2015 activity was the European Parliament event in October 2012 (discussed below), supported by the sharing of post-2015 briefings with key MEPs.

Policy Papers

A policy paper - *Europe: Leading the way. Why the EU must make its development cooperation age-friendly* - was produced by HelpAge in 2010 and the updated in 2011, but even so became out of date when the project focus changed. A briefing for parliamentarians was also produced explaining the issues, referencing the growing public support within Europe, and describing how they can get involved. One specific ask was for MEPs to amend the references to cross-cutting themes through the EU’s programming guidance for the 2014-2020 financing instruments (particularly the European Development Fund) to include older people.

European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations

The declaration of 2012 as the European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (EY2012) helped to give greater visibility to older people’s issues in general, not just HelpAge’s work. Whilst EY2012 focussed on ageing in Europe, HelpAge used the opportunity to highlight the importance of considering commitments for older people everywhere. Being a member of the EY2012 Stakeholder’s Coalition helped in multiplying communication channels, with other members displaying details of the campaign on their website or disseminating it across their networks and members. The project as a whole was also given greater visibility through inclusion on the European Commission’s official EY2012 website.

The Linking Real Lives objectives were integrated into the HelpAge *EY2012: Call for Action* document which called for the EU to: recognise the significance of global ageing in its ‘Agenda for Change’; add ‘older people’s rights’ to the list of cross-issues to be mainstreamed in its external financing instruments and programming guidelines to the EU Delegations; and mainstream the needs of older people as a vulnerable group throughout its humanitarian sectoral policies. Supported by the HelpAge EU network of nine Affiliates, the document laments the absence of ageing from the document ‘*Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: An Agenda for Change’* (noted above). Following the statement, eight MEPs wrote to European Commissioner Piebalgs highlighting the petition and expressing support for the project.

Engaging MEPs

Prior to the Linking Real Lives Project, HelpAge had no strategic plan for engaging with MEPs, but made connections on an ad hoc basis. HelpAge had an existing relationship with the Commission but this was predominantly around social protection rather than wider issues on ageing. The project enabled a clear strategy and targets to be developed, including positioning HelpAge more strategically amongst MEPs - enabling MEPs in partner countries to be targeted both at a national level (through partners) and also at EU level through HelpAge Brussels office.

**Learning 1:** Mapping of MEPs (and committees) across Europe and targeting proved useful, as HelpAge could explain why it was approaching certain individuals and also coordinate advocacy work across the HelpAge Network, and at the national and EU levels. Some people responded better to being approached by national partners (sharing information, inviting them to events and providing updates), whilst others preferred contact through HelpAge in Brussels.

The lobbying of MEPs by supporters was dropped from the project due to problems with software and replaced with a petition (see section 2.7). This practical difficulty was added to the learning of partners and HelpAge EU office during the course of the project regarding the time-intensive nature of working with MEPs, the value of being very targeted and strategic about which ones to approach, and advice from European Parliament contacts. As a result only a small percentage of MEPs were contacted by the project. In years 2 and 3 the decision was therefore taken to focus on quality rather than quantity - building relationships with existing supportive MEPs, rather than diversifying support. Partner organisations contacted MEPs in their countries, but they found that the message was a bit complicated and abstract, and that older people in developing countries weren’t generally considered important enough in the political arena. However, successful relationships were developed with a small number, by involving the older activists and sharing the video messages produced. An international ADA meeting was held in Brussels on the 4 October 2012, with attendees including MEPs and a range of key stakeholders, which gave greater attention to ageing and older people’s issues in EU development policy.

**Learning 2:** Active engagement of MEPs through targeted and strategic approaches can be more effective and powerful, rather than mass communications that reach out to large numbers quite superficially.

By the end of the project, 15 MEPs from across the political spectrum (from Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Ireland, Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia and UK) had taken direct action in support - five MEPs remain in regular contact with HelpAge Brussels. This success is clearly demonstrated in that several of these MEPs signed the petition themselves and in some cases issued statements of support, publicised it on their websites or submitted relevant questions to the EC. According to HelpAge’s website, nine (of the 15) parliamentarians and government Ministers are happy to be publicised as supporting the campaign and having signed the petition:

* Milan Cabrnoch, MEP, Czech Republic: Co-Chair of the European Parliament Intergroup on Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity
* Danilo Türk, President of Slovenia
* Thijs Berman, MEP, the Netherlands: Coordinator for the Socialists and Democrats Group on the Development Committee
* Lambert Van Nistelrooij, MEP, the Netherlands: Co-Chair of the Inter-group on Ageing
* Filip Kaczmarek, MEP, Poland: Member of the European Parliament’s Development Committee; Member of the Parliament’s Delegation to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, a unique international forum of elected representatives from Africa, Caribbean and Pacific states and the European Union
* Heinz Becker, MEP, Austria: Member of the European Parliament's Committee on Employment and Social Affairs; Co-Chair of the European Parliament Intergroup on Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity
* Karl Erjavec, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Slovenia
* Mjoca Kleva, MEP, Slovenia, Member of the European Parliament's Committee on Regional Development and on Women's Rights and Gender Equality
* Ivo Vajgl, MEP, Slovenia, Member of the European Parliament's Committee on Development

Jean Lambert, MEP, UK (Co-president of the European Parliament Intergroup on Ageing; Chair of Delegation for Relations with countries in South Asia) also supports HelpAge – and was the MEP able to be interviewed. She reported that she had tabled questions in the European Parliament and has highlighted issues of social protection and older people, particularly in post-MDG discussions.

Discussions with HelpAge staff highlighted that they saw the Linking Real Lives project as a valuable opportunity and resource to develop models for working with MEPs, and to positioning HelpAge more strategically with the European Parliament. In terms of developing relationships with MEPs, it was noted that it can be difficult for organisations to stay in touch. HelpAge has engaged in follow-up with MEPs, however MEP Lambert mentioned that it was good to have more regular engagement, such as occasional meetings or updates, along the lines of, “this is what you were involved in, this was the outcome, and this is what we’d like you to do next.”

**Recommendation 4:** Increase follow-up with supportive MEPs.

Within Slovenia, the partner organisation expects long lasting support from their MEPs, as they feel that the politicians are aware of the issues and are “ready to collaborate”. However, there is less confidence in the Netherlands, as development, aid and solidarity are all felt to be losing ground on the national agenda (due to budgetary cuts, and focus on domestic older people’s issues).

The project offered the opportunity for national organisations in four EU countries (Czech Republic, Netherlands & Slovenia (partners) and Ireland (sub-grantee) to advocate together for the inclusion of older people in EU development policy. HelpAge chose these organisations as they are all Affiliates (one of the core objectives of the HelpAge strategy to 2015 is to build the capacity of Affiliates and make them stronger advocates), with lower levels of development education and from new/accession EU countries (which were preferred by the EC in the call). However, the small number of organisations involved means that only 68 MEPs (less than 9%) and Ministers from four (of 27 EU countries[[7]](#footnote-7)) countries had the potential to be approached by national organisations. Widening the range and number of EU-based organisations involved may have had greater impact on influencing EU policy.

**Recommendation 5:** Consider increasing the number of Affiliates involved, to increase the potential impact of a project in influencing EU policy.

Impact of HelpAge’s Work

The rapporteur of a report on the Millennium Development Goals post-2015 framework[[8]](#footnote-8) was Filip Kaczmarek MEP, who was engaged with the project (see section 2.7). The report was drafted in February 2013 and adopted in June 2013, and makes two references to older people: “*[The European Parliament]...(9) Calls for the goals of the post-2015 development framework to include the MDGs as well as the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and promote prosperity and well-being for all, including disadvantaged groups, such as women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities”* and *“[The European Parliament]…(77) Points out that clear and measurable indicators…are crucial for monitoring and reporting on progress achieved in respect of areas such as…social protection (e.g.…protection against the special livelihood deprivation of women, children and the elderly).”*

In February 2013, the EC adopted a further (non-binding) Communication, ‘*A Decent Life For All: Ending poverty and giving the world a sustainable future’*, which includes a reference to ageing: “*The increase in the world's median* *age is expected to affect developing countries most, with consequences for health services and pensions, as well as tax revenues”.*

As with any policy changes, it is difficult to conclude how much the content of these two documents is attributable to the Linking Real Lives project directly, as they may have been influenced by other factors such as WHO’s report on ageing and health (April 2012), EY2012 more generally, demographic change being increasingly difficult to ignore, increased media attention, and the personal interest of those involved. Nevertheless, many of these factors have themselves been significantly influenced by the project and by wider HelpAge advocacy efforts.

Moreover, looking at the two documents in turn, although the Rapporteur (MEP Kaczmarek) of the European Parliament report on the MDGs post-2015 framework had a prior interest in ageing, he was engaged with Linking Real Lives so it is therefore highly likely that the project contributed to the inclusion of older people in the report. Considering the Communication, the contribution of the support built through public engagement with the project is less clear. Even so, the increased visibility built through the project’s activities and the attendance of key stakeholders, including the ECDPM think tank engaged on post 2015 at the parliamentary event may well have contributed to the increased prominence given to the issue, which may have helped to affect change.

In addition to the work on EY2012 and engagement of specific MEPs, the following activities by HelpAge through the Linking Real Lives Project may have had an impact:

* A parliamentary question for EY 2012 signed by 9 MEPs on 10 November 2011
* A parliamentary question tabled by Thijs Berman on 13 January 2012
* A letter on 1 March 2012, sent by HelpAge and co-signed by 3 MEPs, to the Co-President of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly calling for them to promote older people explicitly in the programming guidelines and EDF proposals
* The parliamentary event in October 2012, co-hosted by two MEPs (Lambert and Berman) and attended by representatives from the ECDPM think tank and DEVCO.
* The petition (asking the EU to reference older people in its policies) collected almost 10,000 signatures (0.002% of the EU population[[9]](#footnote-9)) and was referenced in HelpAge communications

Policy Map

Whilst it is difficult to definitively attribute any one action to policy change, the map below suggests some of the ways in which the activities of the Linking Real Lives project may have resulted in policy change and fed into the overall project objective.

*Policy Map – Activities specifically undertaken as part of LRL are shown in bold*

Greater awareness of older people and ageing in development amongst key EU policy and decision-makers

**Objective**

Raised profile of the issue within the EU more broadly

Engagement with key advocacy targets, e.g. DEVCO and think tank

Evidence of support in EP through development of MEP champions, and expression of support via websites, PQs, signing letters etc.

**Mid-term Outcomes**

**Activities:** *Planned, Actual & Supporting*

**Incorporation within EY 2012 activities**

Communications to Council and ACP EU JPA

**Strategic targeting of MEPs**

Ongoing HelpAge EU policy work

**Parliamentary event**

Activist lobbying through petition

**National level advocacy (Slovenia)**

DEVE Committee produces report that has reference to demographic change

Ageing recognised in Communication a Decent Life for All:

**Impact**

*Names of attendees not captured for follow up*

*Time consuming nature of MEP engagement work. Some MEP follow up limited.*

*MEP emails dropped, petition not submitted*

*Lack of national level activity towards ACP EU JPA*

***Challenges***

## 2.3 Specific Objective

*“Create active awareness amongst the EU public and MEPs of the issues older people in developing countries face and their unrecognised contribution to reducing poverty in their communities”*

From the project documentation, progress towards the indicator target is unclear.

We believe this indicator to be met, although there is some lack of clarity because of changes in implementation. According to the logframe, the indicator refers to the number of activists lobbying their MEPs, as per the original plan. However, following discussions with HelpAge, the expectation for this indicator is the number of people in EU countries who have taken part in campaign actions, including ADA activities and the EU petition. (See also section 2.7 and the discussion on indicator 4.2, which refers to the number of ADA events taking place in the EU). On this basis, the target has clearly been exceeded, with a total of over 35,000 people engaged in campaign actions at the EU level.

**Recommendation 6:** Update log frame indicators if an implementation approach changes and monitor progress as part of project implementation and reporting.

From the documents available, the following numbers of people took active part in campaign actions (in addition to the 9,720 people who signed the petition).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Country** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** |
| **Czech Republic** | * >50 people in Solidarity ‘Fun Run’ | * > 2,500 people in Senior’s Day Solidarity Run with MEP Cabrnoch. | * Number unclear - Solidarity ‘Fun Run’ attended by Zuzana Roithova, MEP. |
| **Netherlands** | * 30 people participated in dialogues at ’50 plus’ fair * Photographs taken for support for 1 October & older people’s rights * 2 campaign ambassadors selected. * Petition at 17 dinner dialogue events. | * Over 400 people took part in the dinner dialogue meetings were facilitated by four organisations including a member of the “Senior party” in Maastricht | * 40 ADA pictures taken * 33 personal quotes collected |
| **Slovenia** | * Film screening and material distributed and petitions were signed during the Festival for Third Life. | * > 350 older   people met the mayor in their towns and cities   * Representatives from 178 Slovene organisations working with older people met at a special ADA meeting * Group of 12 older people campaigners and five younger people (aged 19-21) showed solidarity support for older people in developing countries and were involved in ADA on 1 October * Active collaboration of older people from 13 regions was held with representatives in Slovene National Parliament * All regions established expert groups of older professionals to engage in communication and collaboration with field offices of all MPs. * Petition signatories included the Minister for the Slovenes Abroad * Awareness-raising activities at the Festival for Third Age. | * 22,000 people participated in ZDUS annual campaign of active citizenship, pushing for parliamentary action on national policy change. |
| **Ireland** | * An international conference involving the Minister for Overseas Aid was organised and a sketch about ADA presented at the conference. | * 150 people attended Storytelling event, including sharing of information and holding ADA placards for a group photo for the campaign * ADA included in 5 workshops held by Age Action Ireland attended by approximately 80 people. | * Photo action   Campaign promoted Age Action Ireland meetings and Positive Ageing Week   * Distributed leaflets and discussed ADA and ageing as a global issue |
| **TOTAL across 4 ADA Campaigns in EU (if given)** | (unclear) | **> 3,800 people** | >22,000 people |

Considering feedback obtained through interviews and self-assessment forms, partners had a mixed response on the effects of the project on the general public: although members of the general public signed the petition, partners reported that it’s “hard to say if it is a deep, long level of support.” Some felt that more people expressed understanding and support over time, whilst others felt less optimistic as there are “so many other issues in the world.”

Looking at the wording of the indicator, it can be seen that it attempts to monitor the first part of the specific objective (active awareness amongst the EU public), rather than active awareness amongst MEPs (the second part of the specific objective). Looking at this latter issue the project did not meet its original intention of reaching all 785 MEPs; nevertheless, the altered approach to targeting a small number of MEPs discussed in 2.1.1. above (due to technical issues and project learning) was clearly successful. 15 MEPs showed some level of engagement with the Linking Real Lives project and five MEPs demonstrated excellent engagement.

## 2.4 Result One

*“An increased capacity amongst partners and sub-granted target groups to creatively present the authentic voice of older people and the issues they face”*

Considering the indicators and targets for this result, the first (monitoring campaign updates and activist profiles) was exceeded. The target for the number of ADA video messages of solidarity posted online (indicator 2) was also met.

Activities for result 1 included partner training, production and promotion of films, and ADA events in Kyrgyzstan, Mozambique, Philippines, South Africa and Sri Lanka. These are evaluated against the logframe indicators and for wider effectiveness. Key questions include:

* How effective was the training provided to partners?
* How were the films used?
* How appropriate were the films produced?
* What effect did participation have on the older people involved?
* What activities were undertaken and what were the outcomes (if any) of the ADA events in Kyrgyzstan, Mozambique, Philippines, South Africa and Sri Lanka?

How effective was the training provided to partners?

Training was provided to EU partners, Kenya, Mozambique and South Africa (though the latter self-taught, as schedules conflicted) and a training of trainers manual, leaflet and video on how to use the cameras were produced for partners. Although it wasn’t clear in the proposal, HelpAge intended for the FLIP cameras to be pilot-tested amongst partners in the first year. Unfortunately the FLIP cameras were found to be of poor quality, particularly compared to what else became available during the course of the project, and as a consequence they were instead only used indoors. Some blogs were produced instead of videos in Year 1 as a result. In Year 2, the FLIP camera was replaced by a better quality camera and rolled out to all the countries (though videos were produced by professional consultants in Kenya and occasionally in the Netherlands).

The training was appreciated by the partners involved and most felt that their abilities to film older people for advocacy purposes improved. In particular, Sri Lanka, South Africa and Kenya all reported that their staff now had the capacity and confidence to use video cameras in other activities. In contrast, the Netherlands had hoped to train older people to use the cameras, but found them too difficult for people to handle and a bit awkward to have a ‘normal conversation’ in front of them. Older people found it easier to be interviewed by an ‘external’, but kind interviewer, rather than have a discussion on film. Ireland was unable to produce many videos due to insufficient staff capacity and difficulty in finding older people who were happy to be filmed. Age Action staff in Ireland also reported that older people were suspicious (and probably a little confused) as the organisation was campaigning for increased pensions in Ireland, but at the same time, it was saying that the situation in Ireland was “better than elsewhere.”

How were the films used?

Sub-grantees used a structured interview approach to their films (the questions were developed by HelpAge International), with activists concluding with one of a choice of two targeted statements. The films were shared on other (non-HelpAge) websites, at events, in shopping malls, with local television channels, and specifically to young people. A number of sub-grantees also used the cameras in other settings, to raise awareness of older people’s issues and their organisation’s work. The partner in Mozambique produced a video diary of an older activist and recorded a campaign action.

How appropriate were the films produced?

This evaluation’s review of the films produced found them engaging, portraying older people well: in-line with the brand guidelines, ‘Age Helps’, older people came across as inspiring and knowledgeable. The standard of editing varied, however, this does not undermine the concept of the films, as the viewer has the impression of viewing a ‘real’, rather than stylised, conversation between older activists around the world.

What effect did participation have on the older people involved?

Through participating in the production of these video messages, the sub-grantee in Kyrgyzstan reported that older people felt part of a global network and empowered to advocate for their rights. Many partners and sub-grantees reported that older people involved with ADA had grown in confidence and capacity to participate in the campaign.

What activities were undertaken and what were the outcomes (if any) of the ADA events in Kyrgyzstan, Mozambique, Philippines, South Africa and Sri Lanka?

Although there were no indicators in the logframe to monitor progress, the result also included the ADA events in the sub-grantee countries[[10]](#footnote-10). Examples of these are shown in the table below:

*Examples of non-EU ADA activities and events*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Country** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **Outcome** |
| **Kyrgyzstan** | * Meeting was organised with the Minister of Women and Social Affairs | * Meeting with Head of the Department for Older People, the Social Fund and the Mandatory Health Insurance Fund * Five round table discussion meetings in different regions of Kyrgyzstan * 86 people, including representatives from government departments attended a special ADA Conference in Bishkek. * Cultural event organised to celebrate International Day of Older Persons | * Older people met Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Interior, Social Fund, and local self government * 400 people attended | * Government promised to create a specific law of protection of older people’s rights. * Increased media interest * Stronger engagement with the Minister to support her discussions with the Minster of Health. * Government promised to help older people (e.g. improve heating, building tea house) |
| **Mozambique** | * Meeting with Minister of Women and Social Affairs * Community cultural activities and health fair | * Public awareness activities, e.g. cultural gala, school football tournament, painting competition and media event | * Meeting with governor and administrator in Boane district * 1,650 citizens took part in campaign | * Government expressed interest and commitment to elaborate the law that protects older people rights, and have created the Terms of Reference for the process * National Council of Older People developed as a multi sectoral group to focus on polices, programs and plans related to ageing and push the ageing agenda forward. * Activists established endorsement from current First lady, to organise a future meeting with the President. |
| **Philippines** | * Almost 2,000 older people gathered together to celebrate the International Day of Older People and the opening of the Week of the Elderly. | * 1,000 people took to the streets of Manila, for an ADA walk-for-life march, followed by a rally and press conference | * Meeting with President to discuss baseline data for the Social pension law.   + “Walk for Life” involved 1500-2000 older people   + ADA Inter-generational concert , involving 470 older * people and 140 young people   + Two radio interviews | * Congressman Arquiza emphasised that he would take an action so that the social pension (for those 60 years and over) will be implemented as mandated by law |
| **South Africa** | * Meeting organised with delegates from Government Office | * > 440 people marched demanding improved access to health services for older people * Older people drafted a memorandum requesting age-friendly services from the Department of Health. |  | * Government created a Senior Citizens Parliament * Department of Social Development beginning to agree to pay pensions through rural centres * Ward 38 Councillor signalled support for the campaign and will make representations for age friendly health care to authorities in Durban and across KwaZulu Natal |
| **Sri Lanka** | * Joint walk, involving >500 older people * Meeting between older people and Hon. Minister of Social Services, Secretary of Social Services Ministry, and Head of Operations in the EU Delegation to Sri Lanka | * 500 people attended ceremony with the National Secretariat of Elders in Colombo * Partnership formed with National Secretariat of Elders * Meeting held with new Secretary of the Ministry of   Social Services, | * March and event organised by HelpAge Sri Lanka in partnership with the Ministry of Social Services, involving 600 participants | * Minister appointed HelpAge Sri Lanka’s Chairman as an Honorary Consultant to the Ministry of Social Services * Ministry of Social Services met its promises and forwarded a revised cabinet paper to grant social pension of SL Rs. 1,000/- for those above 80 years * Minister promised to submit a fresh cabinet paper to implement a new senior citizens’ allowance of 2000 Rupees per month for all older people over 75 years old who are not already receiving a pension or other benefits from the government. * Minister of Social Services pledged to allocate funds from the Treasury's 2012 budget to cover expansion of older age allowance to cover all people over 80 years * Older people above 70 to receive payment of Rs.1000 |

## 2.5 Result Two

*“An increased capacity amongst EU partners and sub-granted target groups to engage public audiences with the positive contribution older people in developing countries make to poverty reduction”*

Considering the indicators and targets for this result, media coverage (indicator 1) had no target figure, but the large amount of coverage achieved, and the potential reach of this coverage, means it can be considered to have been met very successfully. The number of people made aware of Make it Ageless and Age Demands Action hugely exceeded the expected number (indicator 2, including reasonable expectations of viewing figures for the ‘Make it Ageless’ and ‘ADA’ sections of the HelpAge website (as it is not possible to know viewing numbers for specific pages); Facebook ads and media coverage. Indeed this can be seen as a conservative figure, given the potential audience reach of some of the media outlets that gave the campaign coverage, e.g. 16 million visitors in one day to The Huffington Post website, and 46,000 readers of just one daily newspaper in Affiliate country Slovenia.

Activities for result 2 included: engagement of young people (particularly through Make it Ageless), media (including website and social media), and the promotion of ADA and the involvement of older people in the campaign in the EU. They are evaluated against the logframe indicators and for wider effectiveness. Key questions include:

* How did the project work with young people? Was it effective?
* What was the role of media? Which strategies were used, and how effective were they?
* How was Age Demands Action promoted?
* How were EU older people involved with ADA (excluding films)? What was the effect of their involvement?

How did the project work with young people? Was it effective?

Engaging with young people was a completely new demographic group for HelpAge and is an important group for them to continue with in the future.

The proposal originally planned to raise awareness amongst young people (18-30 years) along the lines of, *'the world you live in tomorrow is decided today’,* with a set of messages developed around the idea of *'****What if*** *older people did not exist in the world?'* This approach was repeatedly delayed (due to year one implementation delays and the resignation of the Project Coordinator), which must have had some effect on the number of people reached, as the time available was significantly reduced. Research, including online surveys and pilot testing, was undertaken in the second year, amongst young people in 7 EU countries (partner countries, plus Ireland (sub-grantee), Spain, Germany and UK), to better understand young people's attitude towards older people and getting older, and their knowledge of the challenges faced by older people in developing countries and to share HelpAge’s slogan and look and feel for the campaign. Using the findings, and after testing three slogan names and images, the consultants recommended that the slogan be changed to 'Make it Ageless' (rather than the planned 'What If') and launched at the beginning of year three, to take advantage of the 2012 European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations and the associated European Day on April 29th 2012. The final message was, *'The right to be heard is timeless. Make it Ageless'*, and asked for the EU to include older people in development policies and programmes. The branding was tested positively in EU countries and this seems to be borne out by the achievement of the media coverage and awareness indicators, especially the estimated high numbers of hits for the website (discussed below).When the initial research for Make it Ageless (MIA) was commissioned, the Linking Real Lives project had already been going for a year. The MIA strategy was good in itself (with the message on the inclusion of older people in development policies/programmes simplified and clarified for young people), but it was then ‘brought back’ as a semi-separate approach from, but also fully part of, the Linking Real Lives project. This led to some confusion. It may have been clearer if HelpAge had thought through the interactions and targets in advance, rather than developing a strategy as the project progressed. Make it Ageless grew from being just one small part of Linking Real Lives, to having far more prominence than the original proposal suggested and appearing as a separate campaign (even though that was not the intention). This increased focus was partly due to the delay in undertaking the research, which increased the pressure to collect the target number of petition signatures and to raise awareness among young people in the remaining time. The final review meeting with partners also highlighted the difficulties they’d experienced in integrating MIA with ADA (and the length of time required for this).

[Please note recommendation 2, above]

Young people who had been involved in the campaign were surveyed as part of this evaluation, with responses received from 14 Czech youth, 1 (very active) Slovene and none from the Netherlands. Of these, 10 (67%) had been involved in MIA/ADA but only 2 (13%) had signed the EU petition (discussed below). 8 people (53%) had watched the videos produced by older activists in Kenya (also discussed below), but apart from the very active young person from Slovenia, none of the other young people had been involved in any of the other campaign-related activities. 11 (73%) of the young people reported that they would campaign for older people’s issues again in the future, but given the small proportions who had signed the petition, alternative ways of engagement may be needed. This relatively high figure (from the small number of young people who responded to the survey) suggests that there is an opportunity here for HelpAge to strengthen their relationship with youth, and use their specific skills and enthusiasm to campaign for older people’s issues in the future.

**Learning 3:** If effectively motivated and supported, young people can bring time, energy, enthusiasm and commitment to an issue. However, this requires heavy investment in order to understand this target group.

**Recommendation 7:** Continue engaging with young people in future, as they are an important demographic group and have particular strengths to bring to HelpAge’s work.[[11]](#footnote-11) Partnerships with local younger people’s organisations and tapping into existing networks should be considered.

Cordaid in the Netherlands reported that young people involved in the campaign were highly motivated. Slovene Philanthropy was able to directly recruit activists from students taking the ‘Social Work with Elderly People’ class at university, with a small group (9-10 students) becoming very engaged in campaign events. However, it was noted that: “it probably wouldn’t be accurate to say that interest and involvement of younger people in the ADA-related topics and issues in our community noticeably improved. We raised some petition signatures from this group, but in my opinion not much of a long-term interest was developed this way.” In contrast, very few young people were interested to become involved with Zivot 90’s activities in the Czech Republic. Ireland reported that the 2012 Year of Intergenerational Solidarity meant that they had contacts with youth organisations, and would have liked to have done more, but internal capacity constraints severely limited what was possible. In discussions during the learning session of the final review meeting, partners reported a positive response from older people to the involvement of young people in the project.

In discussions with HelpAge staff, it was felt that activities worked well and around the launch of the MIA campaign slogan (April 2012), there was lots of social media momentum and reaction. However, although there was another spike in activity after the Brussels event (October 2012), they found that it was difficult to hold young people’s attention for a long period of time, and HelpAge recognise that they didn’t really have a plan as to how to follow-up with younger activists: “We had people signing up to be an MIA champion on our website but we hadn’t thought through well enough what that meant, what we should send them, as we’d never done that from the London office before.”

In terms of keeping people involved, HelpAge staff wondered if perhaps the campaign ran for too long or didn’t have enough to keep the momentum going. From an external perspective, the many elements of the campaign (intergenerational support, solidarity between older people in Europe and developing countries, and lobbying the EU to give more money to older people in developing countries) and the internal confusion of Linking Real Lives vs Age Demands Action vs Make it Ageless (discussed above), meant that the message wasn’t clear enough for it to be really engaging.

**Recommendation 8:** Ensure that campaign messages are clear and concise, to engage people and encourage their involvement.

What was the role of media? Which strategies were used, and how effective were they?

A media strategy was developed, with the objectives being to:

* Secure positive, high profile coverage in order to galvanize debate over the provision of policy and rights for older people
* Stimulate debate between campaigners, the media and opinion formers as to the best way/s to engage young people with the issue of global ageing
* Drive web traffic to the campaign site, specifically to the online petition
* Raise awareness of the contribution older people make to young people and society across the globe
* Profile HelpAge International and Partners as thought leaders/active agents.

The Make It Ageless campaign was covered by 11 Pan-European media services from the Information Daily to The Huffington Post UK. Additional coverage was received in partner countries such as Slovenia and the Czech Republic. A very large amount of media coverage (467 pieces) was achieved, though a number of countries reported difficulty in getting interest from the media on older people issues in developing countries. Further analysis of this reported figure may therefore be useful. As noted above, the overall reach of the media coverage could potentially be huge, with some outlets having audiences in the millions, and even national level outlets reaching tens of thousands.

In relation to building capacity amongst partners, organisations reported good support from the media officer and the Make it Ageless resources and comprehensive media toolkit. A number of organisations mentioned that journalists still needed to learn to portray positive images of older people as active contributors to development and society, but also that the issue of elderly people and international development doesn’t seem to raise much media interest. Contacts with partner organisations and individuals with pre-existing media contacts also helped with media coverage.

**Recommendation 9:** Building on the successful level of media coverage, this area of work could be developed to turn visibility into a deeper level of understanding and engagement from journalists by actively involving journalists in campaign work; this could include developing a project to train and inform them on older people’s issues, in order to improve the quality and quantity of media coverage.[[12]](#footnote-12)

*Website*

The Make it Ageless website ([www.makeitageless.org](http://www.makeitageless.org/#_blank) ) went live on 12 April 2012 and was promoted widely on social networks.

The website promoted the ‘global march,’ a simplified version of the EC petition text. On signing, people receive an email thanking them and asking them to share the details further. Several days later if they did not opt out of joining HelpAge’s mailing list petition-signers receive a further email telling them they’d signed up to HelpAge’s e-newsletter, offering a hard copy if they sent HelpAge their postal address, and asking what led them to get involved with HelpAge.

The campaign website proposes ‘5 Things you can do’ and also includes a page where activists can find out more about the issues, link to the ADA activists who are listed as ‘heroes', learn more about the national partners, and watch Celebrity DJ Mamy Rock's video message. The website appears clear, well designed, and with the youth target audience clearly in mind. However, as ‘mini-sites’ are branded completely separately to the main campaign/organisation – i.e. ADA and HelpAge – it can make it harder to transition people from one to the other, or even for them to make a mental connection between the two.

*Social media*

Make it Ageless relied heavily on using social networks to reach a new and younger audience, and was successful, especially in attracting views of the films. Tactics include using cost per click Facebook ads; ad words and Google ads; YouTube and Vimeo; a Q&A on twitter for the ‘My week getting old’ project; and blogs.

In April 2012 (when MIA was launched), there were 650 new Twitter followers (a 9% increase) to HelpAge’s account and 350 new Facebook fans. A separate MIA account was not established, but there were no other major HelpAge activities during that time, suggesting the majority of new followers were due to MIA. The social media strategy also involved Facebook fans posterising their profile pictures and adding a Twibbon (31 users) to their Twitter profiles in support of the campaign. The film has been viewed 1311 times (1090 on Vimeo/HelpAge website, 221 on YouTube). Mamy Rock also used her social network to promote the campaign by tweeting and sharing campaign links on her Facebook. She has more than 25,000 followers on Twitter and 3,200 fans on Facebook.

European countries (Czech Republic, Slovenia, Ireland, Netherlands) on the HelpAge website received more than 700 online page views. Blogs from four young Make It Ageless champions also received more than 700 online page views.

**Recommendation 10:** Continue to use social media in future work, as one approach to successfully raise awareness of older people’s issues and HelpAge’s work.

*'My Week of Getting Old'* aimed to generate media content, by challenging young people connected with HelpAge partners in Czech Republic, Ireland, Netherlands, Slovenia and Kenya to spend a week with an older person, capturing in first person editorial, interview, photographs and social media platforms what it means to be old in those countries and what challenges or positive comforts the older person experiences. It was anticipated that one young person per country would be recruited; in fact this was exceeded as three young people were recruited in the Netherlands, two in the Czech Republic and one person in each of Slovenia, Ireland and Kenya.

The blogs may have attracted other young people to the website and encouraged them to consider the issues being discussed by their peers online. Across the eight postings, eight comments were made (the ages of these respondents are unclear), which compares well to other NGO-blogs[[13]](#footnote-13).

The MIA minisite also encourages campaign ‘Champions’, described as: “an active young member in society who has interest or experience in campaigning”*.* Champions volunteer to promote the Make it Ageless slogan, mainly through blogging and social media but also at events. Potential Champions are offered the chance to be profiled at makeitageless.org and receive one of the Make It Ageless T-shirts if they complete a selection of challenges.

The literature includes a list of 31 champions from 16 different countries. Despite the intention that these are young EU activists, less than half are aged 18-30 years[[14]](#footnote-14), and are from non-EU, as well as EU, countries. This doesn’t matter in itself, but does raise issues over the involvement of the target group. The involvement and effect of these ‘Champions’ on the campaign is also unclear.

How was Age Demands Action promoted?

Events were held at the European-level, as well as in Czech Republic, Netherlands, Slovenia, Ireland and the UK, to raise awareness of issues facing older people in developing countries, and recruit activists. Examples of activities are given below:

The MIA slogan was promoted at a number of **European**-level events, including a stand at the European Parliament Open Day, which was promoting the 2012 European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations. Information was also shared with four related organisations and 29 universities / student unions in the **UK**, with at least one - Birkbeck College[[15]](#footnote-15) – displaying the posters with MIA slogan across the campus and expressing interest in hosting the campaign at their next Fresher's Fair. This was also promoted through events in the partner countries for example:

In the **Netherlands** there were 26 meetings at VanHarte Restaurants, reaching around 1,370 people[[16]](#footnote-16). The partner (Cordaid) reported that the Restaurants’ approach (where people met to eat, and discuss community issues) was an effective way of reaching older people. 1,200 also heard about the campaign at a National Youth day in the Netherlands.

In the **Czech Republic**,meetings were held with groups of older people and exhibitions were held at the ‘One World’ Film Festival and an open-air youth festival called Majáles. A ten-minute film on the Life of Older People in the Czech Republic and Kenya was also produced and shown at a human rights film festival as a support film to the festival's main film, as well as in 40 cinemas across the country.

In **Slovenia**, the campaign was promoted at a Festival for Third Life conference and through the Faculty for Social Work, as well as at an awareness-raising campaign at the Students’ Arena and attendance at the Festival of Volunteerism.

The partner in **Ireland** attended expos in Dublin and Galway.

Slovenia and the Czech Republic were able to establish several partnerships with organisations at the national level, which strengthened project implementation, and are expected to continue in the future.

How were EU older people involved with ADA? What was the effect of their involvement?

Many people in the EU were involved in ADA activities and events: at least 25,800 people took part in 1 October events, and some of the details of these are given in the table on page 47-48. However in terms of more engaged activity by older people, beyond 15 older people in Slovenia signing up to become ADA activists in year 1, and 23 EU activist profiles being produced, further documentation regarding ADA activists is limited, perhaps partly because many partners found it difficult to recruit activists who were willing to speak on camera (see section 2.6). Although an ADA group was established in Slovenia and the Czech Republic, this was not possible in the Netherlands – volunteers at the Van Harte restaurants were involved, but they changed over the course of the project.

**Learning 4:** It appears easier to recruit and retain ADA activists in developing countries than in EU countries.

**Recommendation 11:** An assessment of differing contexts and priorities may be useful to understand the differences experienced in recruiting and retaining ADA activists in different countries. Appropriate context-specific approaches can then be developed and tested.

Older people involved with ADA were surveyed in Czech Republic, Netherlands and Slovenia, resulting in 24 responses from the Czech Republic. Of this small group, nearly 90% were women, with around half aged between 71-80 years old. 19 (nearly 80%) of these older people had watched the Kenyan videos, with 5 having filmed a response.

96% of those who responded had joined an ADA group, taken part in ADA activities or been involved in both. 14 older people (58%) mentioned the ability to gain more information as a benefit of being involved with ADA and the campaign. 4 (17%) noted that they enjoyed meeting with other people and 2 (8%) highlighted that it made them realise how lucky they were to live in the Czech Republic. 2 respondents felt that they had gained no benefit from being involved. However, only 4 (17%) people had helped with the organisation of ADA in their country.

None of the respondents had met MEPs or other high level officials as a result of the project, or had attended the meeting in Brussels. 11 (46%) had signed the EU petition (calling on the European Commission to strengthen the EU's development policies and programming for older people in developing countries), and 3 (13%) had shared the details with other people. 15 (63%) of the Czech respondents said that they would campaign for older people in developing countries again in the future.

## 2.6 Result Three

*“A direct two-way engagement between older people in Kenya and EU citizens online and in 3 EU countries is enabled”*

The three indicators regarding communication between older people in Kenya and EU partner countries were generally exceeded, which should be commended given this result included areas of work – such as video production, personal communication between activists, social media – that was new to the EU Affiliates involved.

Activities for result 3 included: production and sharing of films between older people in Kenya and 3 EU countries (Czech Republic, Netherlands and Slovenia), generation of messages of support from younger EU citizens, and ADA events in Kenya. The activities are evaluated against the logframe indicators and for wider effectiveness. Key questions include:

* How were the films produced? Was the quality and content appropriate?
* How did older people engage with the films? Did their perspectives change?
* How were the films used beyond the 2-way engagement between older activists?
* What activities were undertaken and what were the outcomes (if any) of the ADA events in Kenya?

How were the films produced? Was the quality and content appropriate?

Each video instalment consists of ADA group message and an activist profile (an in-depth feature of one member of the ADA group) The Kenyan films were generally produced within the houses and surrounding environment of the older people involved, which helps with understanding of their situation. In year 3, the videos included messages targeted at the European Union and Members of the European Parliament.

The messages from EU activists were intended to be shorter and less in-depth than the Kenya ones, but more people were to be profiled (as it proved difficult to find Europeans who wanted to be recorded). The initial EU messages appear to have been filmed in an office, which reduces understanding of the situation in which the older people live. This was highlighted by Kenyan activists, who were disappointed with this set-up, and also by the EU activists, who requested to be recorded at home. Later messages were therefore filmed at the homes of the EU older activists, which was more in-line with the intentions of the proposal and supported the communication and understanding between the Kenyan and European older persons. It was originally planned that the EU messages would be translated with subtitles for the Kenya ADA group. However, this was changed for both financial reasons, as the cost of doing a Swahili voiceover was found to be prohibitively high relative to the activity output, and following feedback from the Kenya activists that they would prefer verbal translation. It was therefore decided that the video clips would be subtitled into English (so the EU partners could better check the accuracy of translation) and then verbally translated by the HelpAge Kenya Coordinator.

Due to the poor quality of the FLIP cameras (mentioned above), in Year 1 the messages from Kenyan activists had to be filmed indoors, rather than in their day-to-day environment, and in some countries the activist profiles were created by a professional company (rather than the partners, as originally planned), in order to create a better quality film. In Year 2, the FLIP camera was replaced by a better quality camera and rolled out to all the countries.

Unfortunately, there were also a number of delays in producing the sets of films, whether due to the quality of the FLIP cameras, difficulty in finding people to take part (particularly in Europe) or the fact that EU and Kenyan activists wanted older people in the EU to be filmed in their homes (as in Kenya) which required the partners to travel. There were particular problems with recruiting activists in the Netherlands, and therefore some produced blogs instead. Some of these practicalities should have been foreseen at the proposal development stage, through more pre-testing of the cameras (as they were new and a key piece of equipment – discussed above) and more detailed conversations with organisations as to whether older people would be happy to be filmed (this appears to have a significant difficulty in a number of the EU countries involved). As one staff member explained, “Video recordings were very time consuming. Many older people didn’t want to be recorded. I would not repeat this activity.”

**Learning 5:** As with the recruitment and retention of ADA activists (discussed above, see Learning 3), there appears to be significant differences between the willingness of older people in developing and EU countries to be filmed.

**Recommendation 12:** Analyse *how* older people in different countries are willing to be involved in activities, in order to determine successful approaches to use in the future. Variations between contexts can then be incorporated into project plans.

Reviewing the films as part of this evaluation, a range of styles was noted: some appear more as a conversation than others, some of the responses are interviews with a brief reference to the original film in Kenya, whilst some react more specifically to the film. The ‘conversations’ between activists generally work well, as they show the interaction between the two cultures. The films all work well as a series, and along with the films of activists from other countries (result 1), they make an engaging piece of digital communications. They complement each other by raising different issues which are problems for older people in Kenya and Europe, and giving an insight into the different lives of older people around the world, as well as showing the common theme of older people not being provided for. On the website they also complement each other visually, as the map is set-up in an engaging way.

How did older people engage with the films? Did their perspectives change?

At the Year 1 review meeting, concerns were expressed about the relevance and objective of the films, and the lack of link between them and the objective of the project. It was also noted that originally it was planned for 50:50 split between men and women for videos, but it was much easier to find women to take part. A comment from the year 3 evaluation meeting suggested that partners may no longer have details for all the participants, especially those who were involved at the beginning of the project, which suggests the connection with the project and engagement of activists may not have been sustained successfully. Some of the partner feedback from the year 3 meeting also showed that the Kenyan activists found the films limited in terms of content and the connections they felt, and it was suggested that it was a series of monologues rather than a conversation. However the literature also suggests that the activists saw the value in the link and understanding was increased between groups. For example:

“*I am impressed by your message; be sure that we all have solidarity with you”*

Ms.Bozena Lorencova (Czech Republic) to Josephine (Kenya)

*"I am very happy that we continue staying together and co-operating. We unite as one!"*

Josephine (Kenya)

“*You certainly have our moral support”*

Veronica (Slovenia)

*“Right now, before our* *death, we are finally getting some* *support. Some recognition. Thank you*.”

Paul Noroge (Kenya)

*Kenyan Perspective*

7 Older People (ADA Activists) in Kenya were interviewed. All have been involved in older persons groups for many years (3-13 years) – and are planning to continue their involvement - and saw LRL as one very small part of HelpAge’s work. When they were asked to describe the project and the benefits they had received since being involved, all the older people described income generating activities and the ability to meet their basic needs (particularly food) – i.e. aspects of ADA beyond this project – with just one person highlighting empowerment.

All those interviewed had filmed messages to send to older people in Europe. Those who had seen their videos were happy with how they were portrayed, and all reported that they chose the messages that they wanted to put across, as they responded to questions that were asked as they were being filmed. Many chose to talk about ‘the project’ (ADA as a whole, and HelpAge support in Kenya) and the rights of the aged.

A number reported the positive reactions of those in Europe:

*“The people in Europe responded positively and are happy about the project.”*

*“The people of the Europe were happy about the video, and were pleased by my determination.”*

(Though interestingly, it appears that not all the older people had actually seen/heard the European responses:

*“I heard that the people of Europe appreciated the work and that they understood the problems the old people go through.”*

*“I heard that the people of Europe responded very positively and I learnt that exchange is possible and the more we engage the more we learn from each other.”)*

However, they also explained that there wasn’t as much communication as they would have liked:

*“I haven’t heard any response from the people of Europe.”*

*“We rarely communicate with the people in Europe.”*

*“The people of Europe are our friends but it’s a challenge communicating to them as much as we would like to.”*

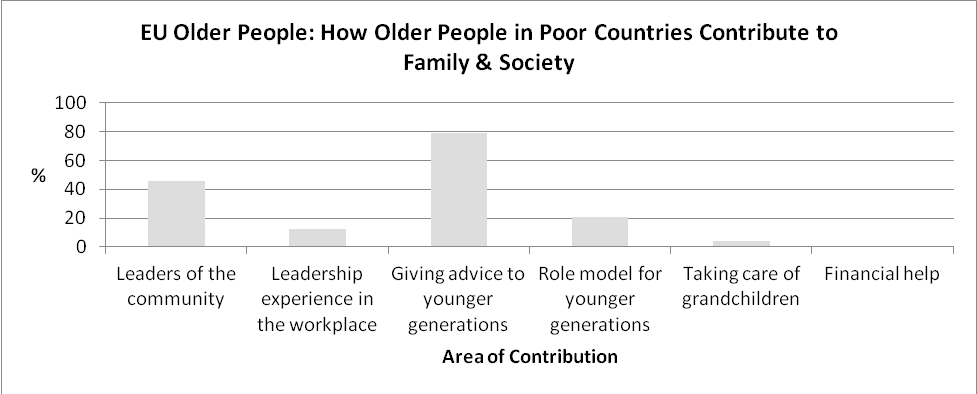
The older people appeared to have been happy to be involved in producing the films and appreciated the engagement with older people in Europe, but did not see any benefits from their involvement and may have had unrealistic expectations of their impact - *“I feel that I haven’t seen any changes as a result of the video”.*

*EU Perspective*

According to partners (and as mentioned above), older people in the EU took a lot of persuasion to participate, as they didn’t want to be filmed or express their views in front of the camera. Early films were very general and open-ended, but some partners felt that the interviews became more closed and focused over time. From year 2 of the project, HelpAge added a request for a call to action, aimed at decision-makers, to resonate with policy influencing work. As far as answering the interview questions, activists were able to respond according to how they felt, except for the message for the MEP at the end – these responses were prepared in advance and designed by HelpAge, as they wanted the messages to be similar. Activists could choose between three messages aimed at MEPs.

Partners reported that the older people in the videos were genuinely interested in this particular communication, even though it was quite artificial. They felt that understanding was developed between the two groups and that people were friendly towards each other, but they don’t expect there to be any further contact.

Within the survey of ADA participants (mentioned above), older people were given a number of statements and asked which they thought were true about many older people in poor countries. Their responses provide an interesting insight into the messages they heard in the videos and other ADA discussions. EU older persons felt that older people in poor countries: care for younger members of their family; work long hours; face discrimination and provide financial support to their families. When asked how older people contribute to family and society in poor countries, the focus was on: giving advice to younger generations and being leaders of the community. Taking care of grandchildren was not mentioned, in contrast to the previous question with people recognising that older people cared for younger members of their family. The figures below show some of the responses from the older people in EU countries who responded to the survey.



When asked about the main thing they have learnt about older people in developing countries (given the responses, the Kenyan videos were a strong influencing factor), many older people in the Czech Republic mentioned that they had been given an insight into their lives and living conditions, as well as their role as carers. A number also highlighted how happy and enthusiastic the Kenyan activists appeared. HIV and poverty were also mentioned.

How were the films used beyond the 2-way engagement between older activists?

Several of the films call directly for European MEPs to work to support older people in developing countries, whilst some simply call for more support or recognition of the role older people can play in development. MEPs saw a compilation of the films at the international meeting in Brussels and year 3 campaign days in Slovenia and the Czech Republic.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of Kenyan activist** | **No. of filmed responses** | **Second film by original activist?** | **Viewing figures** | **No. of comments** |
| Rispa | 4 | Yes | 245 | 0 |
| Paul M | 2 | No | 200 | 5 (HelpAge: 2; YouTube: 3) |
| Josephine | 8 | Yes | 138 | 4 |
| Rhoda | 5 | Yes | 111 | 12 |
| Philomena | 4 | Yes | 87 | 0 |
| Paul | 2 | Yes | 78 | 2 |
| Margaret | 2 | No | 16 | 1 |
| Gertrude | 3 | No | 12 | 1 |
| Ferdinand | 3 | No | 5 | 1 |
| TOTAL | 33 | 5 | 892 | 26 |

The total number of viewing figures is very high compared to other NGO-films[[17]](#footnote-17) and there are a good number of comments (see benchmark referenced above). HelpAge should be commended for the approaches they took to publicising these films. In addition to the website, media and blogs, these include an innovative activist map which shows how Linking Real Lives links to discussions between European Activists and those in developing countries.

There was also a lot of offline activity with the films presented at various events, for example at a fun run in the Czech Republic, and at the Festival for Third Life in Slovenia. In the Philippines the partner took the inventive approach of showing the films shopping malls where they were able to reach a wider audience, both young and old.

**Learning 6:** Significant viewing figures for online films can be achieved through a variety approaches. The cross-fertilisation between on and offline activity is especially noteworthy and could be replicated for future activities.

Looking at the effect of the films, comments posted on the website show that they have already succeeded in raising awareness and empathy, with the immediate effect being a greater insight into the lives of older people in Kenya. Activists generally ask for ‘people to campaign to support older people’, with some requests being slightly more specific by saying, ‘contact your MEP.’ Whether the films contribute towards policy change is very difficult to assess.

What activities were undertaken and what were the outcomes (if any) of the ADA events in Kenya?

This result also includes ADA activities in Kenya, such as a national march on 1 October in Nairobi with older and younger people and meetings with key Ministers to discuss specific demands. The campaign contributed to the Prime Minister announcing that veterans will be able to access health services without payment.

## 2.7 Result Four

*“An intergenerational constituency of public support established in Europe, lobbying MEPs in solidarity with older people in developing countries”*

All the targets were achieved: petition-signers, ADA events in EU on 1 October, and organisation of an international meeting in Brussels with MEPs.

Activities for result 4 include: collecting signatures for the EU petition, ADA events in 4 EU countries (Czech Republic, Ireland, Netherlands and Slovenia), and organising an international ADA meeting for MEPs. The activities were evaluated against the logframe indicators and for wider effectiveness. Key questions include:

* Why was the original plan to lobby MEPs changed to collecting signatures for a petition? Was this an appropriate decision?
* How was the petition organised? How many signatures were collected?
* How was the petition used? Was the petition effective?
* Who signed the petition? How are/were they involved in older people issues? How (if at all) did signing the petition affect their attitudes?
* What activities were undertaken and what were the outcomes (if any) of the ADA events in Czech Republic, Ireland, Netherlands and Slovenia?
* How was the International ADA meeting for MEPs organised? How effective was it?

Why was the original plan to lobby MEPs changed to collecting signatures for a petition?

The original intention to contact MEPs through letters and emails was amended in year one, as it was discovered that there was no single software which serves a Europe-wide activist database, and that software was only available at the national level. As it would have been very difficult to coordinate across countries, the decision was taken to substitute this with a petition to the President of the EC.

**Recommendation 13:** Ensure that all software new to HelpAge is available for use, prior to its inclusion in project plans.

The amendment from letters to MEPs, to a petition, leads to a much lower level of engagement with MEPs. Other alternatives – such as activists communicating directly with MEPs, and hence MEPs lobbying the Commissioner on behalf of their constituents – would have a much higher level of impact, as well as reaching larger numbers of MEPs.

**Recommendation 14:** If a planned advocacy approach becomes impractical, then all alternatives should be explored to decide which approach would be most effective.

How was the petition organised? How many signatures were collected?

**The number of different ‘petitions’ within HelpAge – the (ADA) petition for a UN Convention on the rights of older people; the EU petition (seeking the inclusion of older people in EU development policies); and the MIA Global March (a simplified version of the EU petition) – may appear confusing, although each was presented to different audiences.** The project proposal originally intended to use the ADA petition, but instead, the EU petition to the EC President was used as the main activity for the Linking Real Lives project, combined with a simplified version (the ‘Global March’) which was adapted for MIA.

It is unclear on the website who the target is for the petition or if/how signatures will be used. Due to the changing EU policy environment, HelpAge did not know if there would be an opportunity to officially present the petition in one big event, and so, understandably, did not want to publicly commit to this. The petition is also accessed through the “Europe: Lead the Way” website.

Looking at the two EU-focused petitions, the **'EU petition'** states:

#### *“To Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council:*

***The EU is the largest donor of aid to poor and developing countries. But EU development policies make little mention of ageing or older people. We call on the EU to strengthen the EU's development policies and programming to ensure that older people's contributions and rights are explicitly recognised and supported in EU development cooperation.”***

The petition text is vague (as the petition took place over a long period of time) and the original intention for the petition to be presented to the European Commissioner was not undertaken.

The simplified **'Global March'** text (from Make it Ageless) reads:

*“I support the rights of older people in developing countries and want the EU to put them at the top of their agenda*!”

Together, the two EU-focused petitions collected 9,270 signatures. Of these, around 3,000 (so about one third) were young people, roughly in line with the indicator for a third of petition signers to be from the 18-30 age range[[18]](#footnote-18). However, having two different EU-focused petitions – which could be expected to have the same message and target – feels very confusing.

**Recommendation 15:** Where age specific indicators are used to measure success of an action like a petition, ask people to record which age-*range* they come into within the sign-up process, rather than their specific age, along with a short note explaining that it is useful information for the organisation. This should increase the number of people who report their age and enable age-specific indicators to be monitored more accurately.

**Recommendation 16:** Restrict petitions to one per project, to reduce confusion and improve effectiveness.

**HelpAge found that many people visited the webpage, but didn’t sign the petition. The page was redesigned to try and increase numbers, but staff reported that it was very hard work to get the number of signatures they did. The amount of information available online may also have been too much, as people “don’t have long attention spans,” and the online petition was embedded within the website, “making it difficult to access”. It also noted that older people were often more aware of their privacy, and so were less likely to sign a petition online.**

Regardless of approach, partner organisations generally found it quite difficult to persuade people to sign the petition. In the Netherlands, they felt that people don’t sign a petition easily, and that online-only campaigns need a really interesting video (or something similar) to hook them in – offline events were considered necessary to get signatures. In the Czech Republic, older people were reluctant to sign, due to their memory of communism, although younger people were more responsive. In Slovenia, the message was felt to be too abstract and divided into sub-messages, which as whole may have been confusing. This meant that significant time and personal attention was necessary to persuade people to sign, which was an issue when addressing large numbers at public events. Partners found it useful to reward signatories with promotional material, e.g. cotton bags with leaflets etc, as this worked to get people’s attention and the materials distributed had additional information and further raised awareness.

**Given the complexity of the issue, the best results were when the petition was explained offline, at events. A number of HelpAge staff and partners noted that there may have been too much reliance on online campaigning, rather than instead using resources to organise more events to engage people face-to-face. There appears to be a general underestimation of how many people *don’t* go online, and of those who do, not all like to engage in campaign activities there.**

**Learning 7: Online tools are effective ways to initially inform large numbers of people but with complex issues such as ageing and older people’s issues, it is important to use face-to-face activities such as events, festivals, dinners, to bring about education and deeper engagement. These other activities also reach the large numbers of older people who do not have internet access**[[19]](#footnote-19)**.**

How was the petition used? Was the petition effective?

HelpAge have drawn attention to the petition(s) on a number of occasions, for example:

* At national level events
* With the European Commissioner for Development, in the letter sent by the group of MEPs in 2012
* At HelpAge’s Make It Ageless stand during the EU Open Days in Brussels in May 2012
* Through the EY2012 coalition of NGO stakeholders’ meetings and email updates - several members of the coalition added the Make It Ageless web link to their own website and shared the link with their European networks.
* In the International ADA Event with MEPs in Brussels in October 2012
* In the HelpAge EU network’s open letter to EU Development Ministers in May 2013

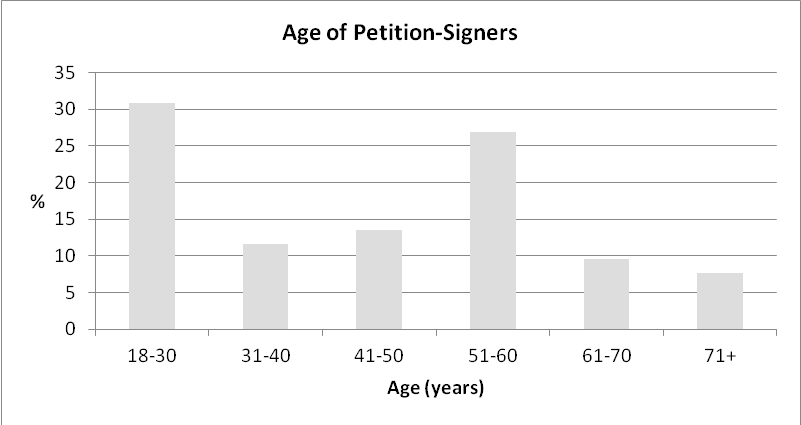
Feedback from the end-of-project review meeting suggested that the petition was felt to be a valuable tool in engaging directly with people, but was not so effective or instrumental in terms of influencing policy. This was also the view of MEP Lambert, who felt, “I think [the petition is] effective in terms of giving people a reason to be engaged and interested and a reason to approach people. It works on that level. In terms of the influence petitions have at the EU level...if they’re not really big stuff they’re not necessarily effective in changing policy... which doesn’t mean you should put them aside because from the public side of engagement with politicians it’s important and some then constituents might go further and contact you directly.” She continued, “I think the Commission are interested in the ideas, so if you’ve got a good idea and it has weight and research behind it, it almost doesn’t matter how you present it. If you table a petition in the petitions committee there is a different set of response in terms of awareness raising, but sometimes written declarations have as much impact as petition....It’s a useful tool, but in policy terms if the idea is interesting, and you have got data, that’s important.” It was therefore a shame that another alternative to engaging parliamentarians via letter or email could not be found.

The substantial focus on the petition was also questioned by HelpAge staff, who noted that with unexpected changes in the policy environment, there was particular difficulty in how to frame the language of a three-year long petition – as the timeframe requires breadth, but action requires depth.

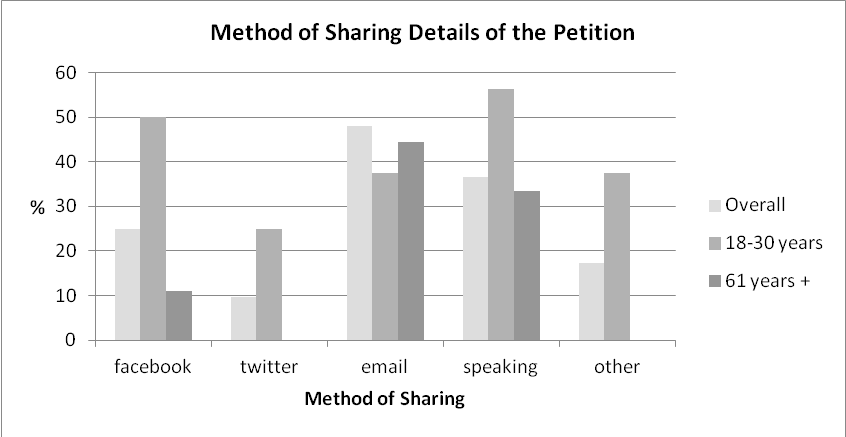
Who signed the petition? How are/were they involved in older people issues? How (if at all) did signing the petition affect their attitudes?

Of the 6,834 people who had signed the petition online, 2,478 (36%) opted out of further communications, suggesting that they were happy to sign the survey, but wanted no further contact from HelpAge on related issues – there were also country differences in this figure, ranging from 8/10% opt-out of the Slovene/English petition, and 92% opt-out from the Dutch petition. As part of this evaluation, 2,655 people were contacted and requested to complete the internet survey. An overall response rate of 2% was achieved, ranging from 0% of Czech petition signers to 2.5% of English petition signers.

The 52 people who responded to this survey came from 21 different countries, both developed and developing, and from Europe, North & South America, Africa and South Asia, suggesting that the campaign succeeded in achieving a wide global reach. The campaign also succeeded in reaching people of a range of ages, as shown below:

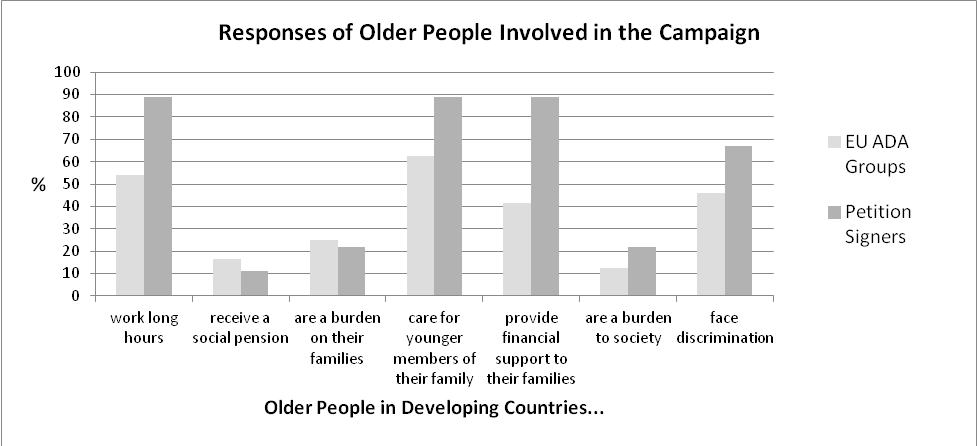


81% had shared the petition with friends/colleagues, rising to 88% amongst those aged 18-30 years and falling to 64% of those aged over 60. As shown in the chart below, email and speaking to friends/colleagues were the most common methods overall, with 18-30 year olds also using Facebook; Twitter was not a common method.

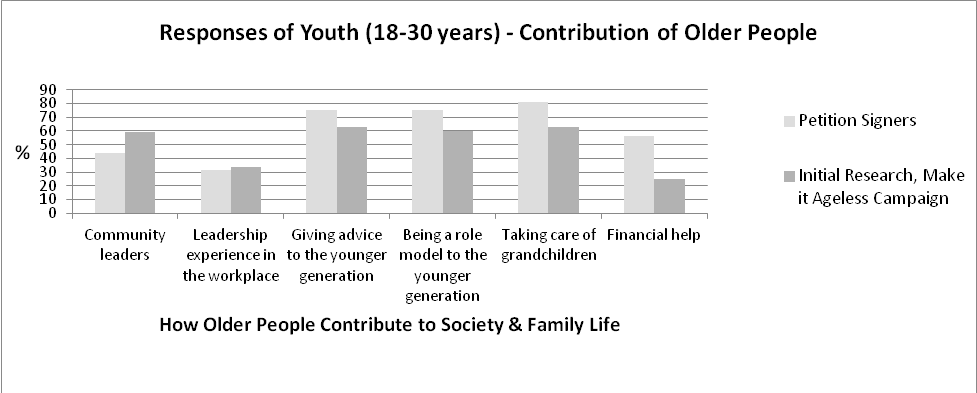
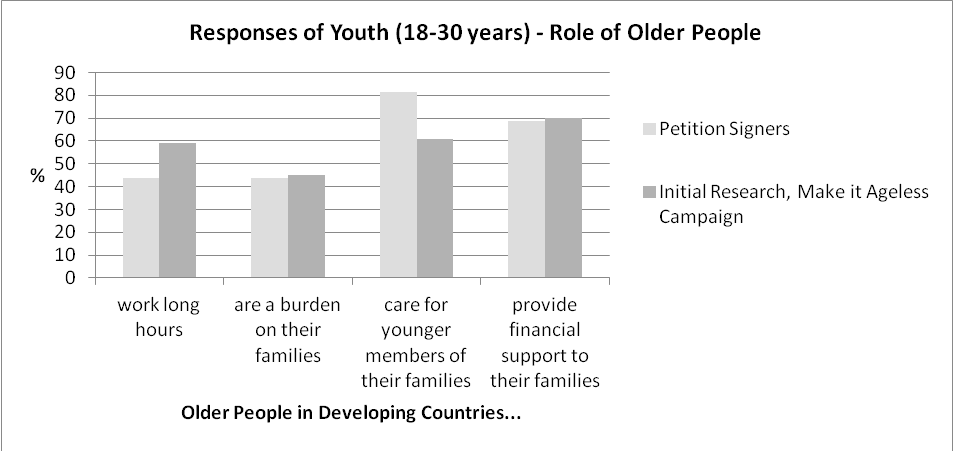


38% of petition-signers had also been involved in activities celebrating the International Day of Older People (1 October) and 27% on the European Day of Intergenerational Solidarity (April 29th) – a slightly higher percentage of older people (44%) were involved on October 31st, and of younger people (31%) on April 29th. Of note is that 44% of respondents (50% of those aged 18-30 years, and 56% of those aged over 60) were also involved in non-HelpAge International activities to support older people, predominantly project and advocacy work (paid or voluntary). This is positive, as it suggests that HelpAge’s work is influencing like-minded organisations, but may be seen as a challenge, in that it is not necessarily the general public who are recognising the importance of older people issues, but people who are already involved. However, of those who signed the petition, a very high 90% of survey respondents (100% of 18-30 year olds, 78% of 61 years plus) reported that they would like to take further action to improve the situation for older people in the future.

The charts below compare the differences in responses from older people involved with ADA groups in the EU (particularly the Czech Republic) and older people who signed the petition. Awareness amongst petition-signers appears to be higher than those who are part of the EU ADA groups established. This may suggest that petition-signers gain more information through the website, or that they are already aware of the situation of older people in developing countries (perhaps through paid or voluntary work) and that signing the petition is just one aspect of their work. Alternatively, it may be due to biased surveyed results, in that those who responded to the survey request are probably those who have been actively involved for some time, compared to older people in EU ADA groups, who are generally learning about the situation of older people in developing countries for the first time.



Another interesting comparison is between young people (aged 18-30 years) who were surveyed as part of the initial research for the ‘What If...’ campaign (which became ‘Make it Ageless’) and young people who signed the petition[[20]](#footnote-20). As shown in the chart below, awareness of the situation of older people in developing countries between youth petition-signers and youth in the general public is not systematically different. The variations seen may be due to differences in survey methodology, or alternatively, the key themes that are discussed in the petition pages of the HelpAge website. Interestingly, comparing the perceptions of the contribution of older people in developing countries to society and family life, youth petition-signers feel that older people generally contribute more, compared to youth in the general public.



What activities were undertaken and what were the outcomes (if any) of the ADA events in Czech Republic, Ireland, Netherlands and Slovenia?

Over the 3 years, at least 12 ADA events (involving a number of activities) were held across the Czech Republic, Netherlands, Slovenia and Ireland. Many of these took place on and around 1 October. The table below provides information on activities recorded in the literature. Some activities are also included in section 2.5 for result 2 and Make it Ageless, as the distinction between the two is not always clear in the project documents:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Country** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** |
| **Czech Republic** | *Active Involvement:*   * >50 people in Solidarity ‘Fun Run’, including screening of Kenya films * 76 people signed petition, including by: President of Slovenia, EU Parliamentarian, Slovene Ombudsman   *Passive involvement:*   * Media coverage Many of these took place on and around 1 October.ouncing that veterans will be able to access health services without payment. | *Active Involvement:*   * > 2,500 people in Senior’s Day Solidarity Run * 1 MEP took part in Senior´s Day and Solidarity Run actions   *Passive involvement:*   * Media coverage | *Active Involvement:*   * Number unclear - Solidarity ‘Fun Run’ * 1 MEP attended Solidarity Run * 537 people signed the petition |
| **Netherlands** | *Active Involvement:*   * More than 1000 people signed petition at dinner meetings and ’50 plus’ fair * 30 people participated in dialogues at ’50 plus’ fair * Photographs taken for support for 1 October & older people’s rights   *Passive Involvement:*   * 17 dinner dialogue meetings, including screening of Kenya films * 100 people attended ‘50 plus’ fair * Media coverage | *Active Involvement:*   * Petition signing at dinner meetings   *Passive Involvement:*   * 400 people @ 8 dinner dialogue meetings * 1 MP attended a dinner meeting and expressed support | *Active Involvement:*   * 50 people signed petition at dinner meetings * 40 ADA pictures taken * 33 personal quotes collected   *Passive Involvement:*   * 120 people attended dinner dialogue meetings |
| **Slovenia** | *Active Involvement:*   * 500 people signed petition at Festival   *Passive Involvement:*   * 10,000 people attended Festival for Third Life, including screening of Kenya films, and distribution of materials * Media coverage | *Active Involvement:*   * > 350 older   people met the mayor in their towns and cities   * Representatives from 178 Slovene organisations working with older people met at a special ADA meeting * 1600 people signed petition, including Minister for Slovenes Abroad * Group of 12 older people campaigners and five younger people (aged 19-21) showed solidarity support for older people in developing countries and were involved in ADA on 1 October   *Passive Involvement:*   * 10,000 people attended Festival for Third Life * Media coverage | *Passive Involvement:*   * ZDUS annual campaign of active citizenship, pushing for parliamentarian process the Act on long term care[[21]](#footnote-21) * Media coverage |
| **Ireland** | *Active Involvement:*   * Organisation of International Conference – participation from Irish Government and aid agencies (including WHO) - including keynote speech from Minister for Overseas Aid, play from university group expressing solidarity for older people, and screening of Kenya films | *Active Involvement:*   * 150 people attended Storytelling event, including sharing of information and holding ADA placards for a group photo for the campaign * 80 people took part in workshops, of which ADA was a part | *Active Involvement:*   * Photo action   *Passive Involvement:*   * Materials distributed |

In Slovenia, Slovene Philanthropy succeeded in ageing being mentioned as a key development priority of a particular national government policy. Interestingly, the International Day of Older Persons (1 October) is included on the website of the government’s Statistical Office with press releases dating from at least 2005, suggesting that the government has been increasingly recognising the needs of older people. The Festival of the Third Age (which was a key awareness-raising route by the partner organisation) has been taking part since 2000 and is the “largest event for older people in Europe”, involving more than 150 organisations. This suggests that although Slovene Philanthropy may have been a factor in the policy change, there were likely other additional factors which contributed.

In the Czech Republic, the response of older people who responded to the survey (mentioned above) was that the campaign had so far had no effect on the Czech government’s attitude towards older people in developing countries, and that the attitude of the general public may have changed only a little, due to the information shared with them. However, the general recommendation was that more information and promotion of the campaign was needed.

There is now interest from the EU partners to focus on the Convention of the Rights of Older People (i.e. the global ADA campaign).

How was the International ADA meeting for MEPs organised? How effective was it?

An international ADA meeting was held in Brussels on the 4 October 2012, to: (i) raise the profile of ageing and older people’s rights in the EU position on the Post-2015 global development framework and in EU 2014-2020 budget framework negotiations and programming; and (ii) provide a platform for dialogue between Kenyan and European Age Demands Action activists and EU decision-makers and development actors.

The meeting was hosted by Mr Thijs Berman MEP and Ms Jean Lambert MEP – members of DEVE Committee and Intergroup on Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity, respectively – and attendees include: a representative from the Policy and Coherence Unit (DG DEVCO), representative from the ECDPM think tank, older activists (one person from each of Kenya, Slovenia and the Czech Republic (due to difficulties in recruiting activists, an activist from the Netherlands was not present)), three youth activists; two from the Czech Republic and one from Slovenia, and representatives from partner organisations. Evidence relating to ageing in developing countries from a joint HelpAge / UNFPA global report ‘Ageing in the 21st Century: A Celebration and a Challenge’ was shared[[22]](#footnote-22) and a compilation of the project’s video messages and three stylised professionally made campaign films were shown.

Feedback from stakeholders suggested that the Kenyan activist would have benefited from more prior support, so that her presentation and messages could be tailored to the EU audience. However, attendees reported that listening to the direct experiences of ‘an older person from a developing country’ was very positive and helped to bring a sense of reality to the issues and how they impact on people’s lives.

From the discussions within HelpAge, the impression was given that arranging such events within European Parliament set-up was still quite a new approach for the organisation, but one in which HelpAge is eager to learn from for next time.

HelpAge feels that the meeting had the following successes:

* MEPs welcomed further dialogue with HelpAge and partners to ensure greater attention to ageing and older people’s issues in EU development policy
* Attendees included a range of key stakeholders, including a representative from the ECDPM think tank (who worked on the European Development Report) and DEVCO
* Contact with the DEVCO speaker led to ongoing engagement
* HelpAge and partners would work further with the European Commission to support work around the post-2015 debate European Report on Development 2013

## 2.8 Project Management

Partner organisations appreciated the support received from HelpAge International, but there appears to have been some difficulties with consistent participation from partners, with UK staff having to take a strong management role in order to ensure that project activities were implemented. Part of this would have been due to the limited capacity (particularly in staffing) of a number of organisations - in the course of the evaluation, most of the partners were mentioned as having limited capacity. More active communication from some partners/sub-grantees (e.g. HelpAge attempted to organise regular Skype calls, but organisations could not always participate) would also have assisted implementation and reduced confusion on certain aspects (e.g. MIA vs ADA). It is not expected that HelpAge, or this project, could have resolved all the capacity issues, but they should perhaps have been considered more at the design stage.

Partners reported that proposals should be thought through much more carefully, in terms of time expectations, capacity and budgets, and that more flexibility is needed in terms of outputs. They also noted that the project may not necessarily be part of partners’ core business, and so HelpAge may find it easier to work with similar, single-issue organisations.

**Recommendation 17:** Consider the capacity of partner organisations at the project design stage, so that any extra support needed can be incorporated and the planned activities are hence within the capabilities of the organisations.

The project adapted well to issues that arose in the course of implementation (and with the agreement of the partners and the EC), for example changing the way that video messages were recorded, and introducing annual face-to-face meetings to enable improved communication and project learning.

Different activities overlap across indicators and they are not always clear in the literature – for example, in the year 2 report, ADA events are highlighted under result 1. This highlights the underlying confusion which seems to exist throughout this project.

## 2.9 Value for Money

The limited monitoring detail means that it is difficult to conduct detailed value for money analysis of the project. However, looking at each result in turn (and assuming that the indirect (human resources, office, monitoring & evaluation etc) costs are split equally across the four results, actual costs (in Euro) are as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Direct Cost** | **Indirect Cost** | **Total Cost** |
| **Result 1** | 64,384 | 71,021 | 135,404 |
| **Result 2** | 110,330 | 71,021 | 181,351 |
| **Result 3** | 91,314 | 71,021 | 162,335 |
| **Result 4** | 65,659 | 71,021 | 136,680 |
| **Total** | 331,687 | 284,082 | 615,770 |

*(small differences in total figures are due to rounding)*

Figures are discussed in detail below, but key unit (or similar-type) costs include:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Result** | **Cost (Euro)** | **Unit** | **Activities** |
| 1 | 109,558.0 | 6 (trained) / 10 (equipped) organisations | Film production |
|  | 25,846.0 | 6 sub-grantee organisations | ADA activities |
| 2 | 60,450.0  0.016 | per country  per person reached | MIA/ADA materials in three EU partner countries |
|  | 10.4  3.75 | per petition signer  per activist recruited | Awareness into action |
| 3 | 2,000.0  3,529.0  1.6 | per older person involved  per film  per viewer | Films between Kenya & EU  *(breakdown assumes budget split evenly between objectives: (i) facilitate communication between older people; (ii) show films more widely)* |
|  | 5,762.0 | 1 partner organisation | ADA activities |
| 4 | 11,025.0 | per EU partner organisation | ADA activities |
|  | 20,456.0 | 1 meeting | International ADA meeting |

Result 1

At a cost of Euro 109,558,the project succeeded in training organisations in six countries and equipping those in ten countries to use video cameras to record the experiences of older people. Even if this didn’t go completely as planned (e.g. problems with FLIP cameras, capacity constraints, some difficulty in finding older people to participate in films), the vast majority of participating organisations felt that their capacity had increased. As this technical and practical capacity should continue into the future, the expenditure feels good value for money.

This result also included Euro 25,846 specific funding for ADA activities in Sri Lanka and the five sub-grantee countries:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Direct ADA Costs** |  |
| **Ireland** | 4,602 |  |
| **Kyrgyzstan** | 3,479 |  |
| **Mozambique** | 2,374 |  |
| **Philippines** | 3,169 |  |
| **South Africa** | 3,150 |  |
| **Sri Lanka** | 9,071 |  |
| **TOTAL** | 25,846 |  |

These ADA activities contributed to significant changes in a number of countries, including: the development/ improvement of specific laws to protect older people’s rights in Kyrgyzstan and Mozambique; the establishment of a National Council / Parliament of older people in Mozambique and South Africa; and pension increases in Sri Lanka. Given the large numbers of people these changes will likely affect, this appears to be an extremely good use of funds.

Result 2

At a cost of Euro 181,351, the project developed and promoted the ‘What If’ (changed to ‘Make it Ageless’) slogan and ADA materials in the three EU partner countries. This averages at Euro 60,450 per country. Although there was confusion around MIA versus ADA, the project did succeed in reaching a staggering 11 million people with MIA/ADA slogans and messages.

A very high proportion of this expenditure could be expected to have contributed to the numbers of people signing the petition (both in person, and online) – along with expenditure of Euro 12,037 from result 4. The expenditure also contributed to the recruitment of activists to participate in MIA/ADA events and online activities. It could therefore be estimated that around Euro 193,388 was spent in collecting petition signatures from 9,270 people and recruiting more than 25,800 activists (as well as reaching people with slogans and messages).

With the budgetary information available, it is difficult to separate expenditure between these three areas, as there is substantial overlap. However, at a very simple level:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Expenditure (Euro)** | **Achievement** | **Number Reached** | **Cost per person, if no other considerations**  **(Euro)** |
| 181,351 | Awareness | 11,000,000 | 0.016 |
| 193,388 | Petition-signing | 9,270 | 20.862 |
| 193,388 | Activist recruitment | 25,800 | 7.496 |

The achievements could also be considered as sequential events, as awareness is needed for people to sign the petition, and further support is then needed for people to become more actively involved. Assuming that active participation – in the form of either petition signing or activism – is the preferred achievement, an arbitrary assumption could be made that half the funds were focused on recruiting activists and half on encouraging people to sign the petition. If this is the case, the project spent around Euro 10 per petition signer and Euro 3.75 per activist recruited. Even with the intrinsic double-counting, these two figures compare extremely favourably to the Euro 145 (£120) it costs to recruit an Age UK supporter (which is defined as someone who has signed a petition and hence become involved with Age UK). Furthermore, the figures will underestimate the cost per petition-signer/ activist, as the data doesn’t capture subsequent actions, such as someone with greater awareness of the issues facing older people starting to campaign, a petition-signer remaining in touch with HelpAge and becoming involved in future activities, or an activist’s continued participation.

Result 3

At a cost of Euro 162,335, one of the project’s key innovations was to facilitate two-way communication between older people in Kenya and in three EU countries. As a secondary objective, the films were shown and made available to a wider audience, in order to raise awareness of the issues facing older people. A good number of films were produced and responses made (14 films from Kenya and 32 campaign updates, plus 3 blogs from EU countries, and also 9 messages of support by younger EU citizens), with the majority of older people appreciating the opportunity to learn about the lives of older people in other countries. The films also provide a good, personal introduction into the lives of older people in Kenya. The effects of the film were generally positive, in terms of engagement between older activists and raising mutual awareness.

Overall, 46 films were produced overall, costing an average of Euro 3,529 each. In order to consider their cost effectiveness, an almost arbitrary assumption needs to be made. The primary objective of this result was to facilitate communication between older people in Kenya and three EU countries, and for them to develop understanding of the issues faced by each other. A secondary aim was to share the films with a wider audience to raise awareness amongst the general public. In light of this, and as the second is not a direct consequence of the first objective, let us assume that half the budget was aimed at facilitating communication between older people, and half was aimed at raising further awareness.

Based on this assumption, it cost around Euro 2,000 for each older person to be involved in the films (estimated at 10 per country: underestimating Slovenia, and substantially overestimating Netherlands), and for them each to be able to actively participate in the communication relationship with older people from another country.

Considering wider audience figures (around 50,000 at festivals, events and online) and half the budget (plus Euro 2,157 under result 2, on projectors, screens, speakers etc, but which is excluded here, to avoid double-counting with other results), the films cost around Euro 1.62 per viewer – though this is underestimated, as it assumes that each viewer watches only one film, which is unrealistic.

Within the result’s total expenditure, nearly one third – Euro 53,333 – was spent on translating, subtitling and editing the films. HelpAge became aware of this high cost and changed approach where they could (for example, HelpAge Kenya staff verbally translated the EU films into Swahili, from English, whilst older people were watching the films), but a cheaper process needs to be considered if similar films are produced again in the future. This cost should also have been estimated more accurately when the project was being designed.

**Learning 8:** Monitoring expenditure (actual vs. expected) highlights approaches that may need to change, and hence enables efficiency gains to be made.

**Recommendation 18:** As far as possible, translate, subtitle and edit activist films within HelpAge. Consider training staff, in order to increase in-house capacity.

The result’s expenditure also includes Euro 5,672 for Kenyan ADA activities, which contributed to influencing the Prime Minister to announce that veterans will be able to access health services without payment. As discussed under result 2, ADA activities appear to offer good value for money, given the level of expenditure and the number of people potentially affected by the policy changes.

Result 4

At a cost of Euro 136,680, this result funded 1 October ADA activities in the three EU partner countries, development of online e-actions and the international meeting in Brussels involving MEPs. The ADA activities had a direct of cost Euro 33,076 across the three countries, averaging Euro 11,025 per country, and Euro 3,675 per country per year. (Although the result indicator includes Irish ADA activities, funding comes from result 2 budget line – an example of the confusion which existed between some activities). The partner EU countries succeeded in raising some awareness and involving 15 MEPs (also influenced by other budget lines), but a key achievement was that Slovene Philanthropy contributed to the success of ageing being mentioned as a key development priority of a particular national government policy. Although details are limited, it could be assumed that this policy could potentially affect hundreds of thousands of people within Slovenia. This suggests that the expenditure on ADA events in particular was cost effective.

The cost effectiveness of the petition is discussed under ‘Result 2’ above. The international meeting in Brussels had a direct cost of Euro 20,546. The majority of this amount was spent on flights and associated costs for staff and activists outside of Brussels to attend. This feels a reasonable amount to spend on an event to raise awareness amongst MEPs in the European Parliament itself, given that it is the international nature of HelpAge-related attendees which contributes to increased understanding of issues facing older people.

Overall

It is highly likely that the project has contributed to the inclusion of older people in two key EU documents, and so it can be argued that the project’s cost of just over Euro 615,770 offers good value for money, given the number of older people that may be affected if the EU takes these documents as the basis for future development policy[[23]](#footnote-23). The project can also be seen as excellent value for money in terms of a basic level of awareness raised (whilst bearing in mind the provisos about overlap given above), given that over 11 million people were reached at an estimated cost of Euro 0.016 per person.

## 2.10 Lessons Learned & Recommendations

### 2.10.1 Learning

1. Mapping of MEPs (and committees) across Europe and targeting proved useful, as HelpAge could explain why it was approaching certain individuals and also coordinate advocacy work across the HelpAge Network, and at the national and EU levels. Some people responded better to being approached by national partners (sharing information, inviting them to events and providing updates), whilst others preferred contact through HelpAge in Brussels.
2. Active engagement of MEPs through targeted and strategic approaches can be more effective and powerful, rather than mass communications that reach out to large numbers quite superficially.
3. If effectively motivated and supported, young people can bring time, energy, enthusiasm and commitment to an issue. However, this requires heavy investment in order to understand this target group.
4. It appears easier to recruit and retain ADA activists in developing countries than in EU countries.
5. As with the recruitment and retention of ADA activists (see Learning 3), there appears to be significant differences between the willingness of older people in developing and EU countries to be filmed.
6. Significant viewing figures for online films can be achieved through a variety approaches. The cross-fertilisation between on and offline activity is especially noteworthy and could be replicated for future activities.
7. **Online tools are effective ways to initially inform large numbers of people but with complex issues such as ageing and older people’s issues, it is important to use face-to-face activities such as events, festivals, dinners, to bring about education and deeper engagement. These other activities also reach the large numbers of older people who do not have internet access.**
8. Monitoring expenditure (actual vs. expected) highlights approaches that may need to change, and hence enables efficiency gains to be made.

### 2.10.2 Recommendations

1. **Ensure that terminology used elsewhere within HelpAge to mean one thing (e.g. ADA, calling for a UN Convention on the Rights of Older People), is not used to mean a different thing in one specific project (e.g. ADA, calling for the EU to increase its support to older people in developing countries), to avoid confusion.**
2. **Restrict each project to just one campaign and slogan, to increase clarity.**
3. **Ensure that the proposal and logframe texts are consistent, to ensure agreement on the project’s overall goal and direction and hence effective implementation.**
4. **Increase follow-up with supportive MEPs.**
5. Increase the number of Affiliates involved, to increase the potential impact of a project in influencing EU policy.
6. Update log frame indicators if implementation approach changes, and monitor progress as part of project implementation and reporting.
7. **Continue engaging with young people in future, as they are an important demographic group and have particular strengths to bring to HelpAge’s work. Partnerships with local younger people’s organisations and tapping into existing networks should be considered.**
8. Ensure that campaign messages are clear and concise, to engage people and encourage their involvement.
9. Building on the successful level of media coverage, this area of work could be developed to turn visibility into a deeper level of understanding and engagement from journalists by actively involving journalists in campaign work; this could include developing a project to train and inform them on older people’s issues, in order to improve the quality and quantity of media coverage**.**
10. **Continue to use social media in future work, as one approach to successfully raise awareness of older people’s issues and HelpAge’s work.**
11. **An assessment of differing contexts and priorities may be useful to understand the differences experienced in recruiting and retaining ADA activists in different countries. Appropriate context-specific approaches can then be developed and tested.**
12. Analyse *how* older people in different countries are willing to be involved in activities, in order to determine successful approaches to use the future. Variations between contexts can then be incorporated into project plans.
13. **Ensure that all software new to HelpAge is available for use, prior to its inclusion in project plans.**
14. **If a planned advocacy approach becomes impractical, then all alternatives should be explored to decide which approach would be most effective.**
15. Where age specific indicators are used to measure success of an action like a petition, ask people to record which age-*range* they come into within the sign-up process, rather than their specific age, along with a short note explaining that it is useful information for the organisation. This should increase the number of people who report their age and enable age-specific indicators to be monitored more accurately.
16. **Restrict petitions to one per campaign, to reduce confusion and improve effectiveness.**
17. **Consider the capacity of partner organisations at the project design stage, so that any extra support needed can be incorporated and the planned activities are hence within the capabilities of the organisations.**
18. As far as possible, translate, subtitle and edit activist films within HelpAge. Consider training staff, in order to increase in-house capacity.

# Conclusions

Linking Real Lives was a pilot for HelpAge in the UK and its global network, and makes a significant, innovative contribution to advocacy and awareness raising on older people and ageing issues. In particular the level of engagement at the European level is new, and can be strongly argued to have influenced two important policy documents; the videos allowed a shared communication and understanding to develop between European and Kenyan older people, with an impressively large wider audience engaged; and the Make it Ageless website and other activities engaged a younger audience with ageing issues for the first time. Overall awareness raising was especially successful, with huge numbers of people reached with ADA or Make it Ageless messaging.

The project met its specific objective and the vast majority of its result targets and the ADA activities appear to have contributed to positive policy changes in a number of countries. Involvement in policy change is always difficult to evidence, but it is highly likely that HelpAge has contributed to a European Parliament report on the MDG post-2015 framework containing reference to older people and may have influenced an EC Communication.

There were certainly challenges in this project. Some issues of confusion (e.g. whether the overall objective was to change policy or raise public awareness; Make it Ageless versus Age Demands Action versus Linking Real Lives; inconsistent monitoring/reporting) and some weaknesses in project design (e.g. a lack of foresight over partner’s limited capacity (particularly time) and technological constraints) seem to recur.

Nevertheless, looking forward, the project has laid some important strategic foundations. There is now a basis for HelpAge to engage strategically with European parliamentarians, with a focus on those from relevant committees. Although there is a high turnover of MEPs (European elections are planned for 2014) and a change in Commission staff every five years, this presents a good striking point for the organisation. Partner organisations – particularly in developing countries, where older people appeared more comfortable in being filmed – now have greater technical capacity and the necessary equipment to continue producing engaging campaign films in the future. The project’s support for in-country ADA activities appears a cost effective way of contributing to national policy change. It is therefore hoped that this could continue.

Overall, although improvements could have been made in project design, this was an ambitious pilot for HelpAge, undertaken with limited resources. It should therefore be praised for making an important, pioneering contribution to advocacy on older people’s issues. The project had a number of successes, particularly with likely contribution to EU policy and communication documents, partner capacity for film production, and ADA activities. It has also laid the foundation for strategic advocacy work at the EU-level in the future. Linking Real Lives has had many achievements of which HelpAge should be proud as it looks to put ageing higher up the political agenda in the post-2015 debate.

# Annexes:

* Terms of Reference
* Linking Real Lives logframe
* Evaluation Objectives & Methodology
* Health Poverty Action team
* Interview questionnaires (MEPs, EU partners, non-EU partners, sub-grantees, HelpAge London staff)
* Survey questions (older people postal; young people online; petition signers online)
* Interview timetable and interviewees
* Kenyan case studies

1. According to the UN (UNDESA (2012) Population ageing and development 2012, Wall chart. UNDESA Population Division), there are currently 577 million people aged over 60 in the developing world. Many of these people could be affected by a future EU development policy on ageing but it is not possible to give a clearer number without a detailed analysis of how these documents will shape EU policy and in which countries that policy would be targeted. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Including 3 month no-cost extension [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Health Poverty Action (HPA) is a UK based international NGO that implements health-related rights programming, policy change and campaigns in 13 countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. They are currently working in consortium with other European NGOs to campaign on health rights issues across Europe with EC funding. HPA has over the years conducted numerous campaign reviews, situation analyses, studies, and mid-term evaluations related to its own projects, and has developed its own set of approaches and methodologies. With this expertise, it has in the past six years started performing evaluations and other assignments on consultancy basis for other NGOs. www.healthpovertyaction.org [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Young people: good response from Czech Republic (14), but only 1 response from Slovenia and none from Netherlands. Older people: good responses from Czech Republic (24), none from Slovenia or Netherlands. Online: overall response of 2% (2.5% from English petition signers), but none from Czech signers.

   The University of Texas ([www.utexas.edu/academic/ctl/assessment/iar/teaching/gather/method/survey-Response.php](http://www.utexas.edu/academic/ctl/assessment/iar/teaching/gather/method/survey-Response.php)) finds that response rates vary by method and on average are: online - 30%; email - 40% ; post - 50%. Survey Monkey gives a good response rate to a cold contact survey (compared to this survey of already engaged people) as 20-30%: https://www.surveymonkey.com/blog/en/blog/2012/03/28/improve-survey-response-rate/ [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The EDF provides support to African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. It sits outside of the main EU budget and is negotiated by the member states and administrated by the European Commission. Budgetary contributions are agreed in the Council by the ACP-EU Council of Ministers. An EDF Committee, chaired by the European Commission and with representatives from the national governments, meets to approve the ACP country and regional strategy papers and oversee the programming process. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The green paper in late 2010 had suggested that the text on programming guidelines (which is drawn from the European Consensus on Development (ECD)) might be reviewed, and so HelpAge were planning to try and influence the outcome. However, the Agenda for Change in late 2011 confirmed that the ECD would not in fact be reviewed and would continue to be the overarching EU commitment on development policy. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Croatia had not yet joined the EU at the time of the project. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. European Parliament, Committee on Development (2012) Report on the Millennium Development Goals – defining the post-2015 framework (2012/2289(INI)), A7-0165/2013 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. EU population, 2012, of 506820764 - http://epp.Eurotat.ec.europa.eu [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Budget-wise, Ireland’s ADA events are included under result 1. However, an indicator in result 4 monitors whether ADA events took place in Ireland. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. HelpAge may wish to learn from the experiences of Restless Development (www.restlessdevelopment.org), a youth-focused INGO which successfully involves young people throughout their work. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. An example of such a project is MIND’s Media Advisory Service on mental health representations: <http://www.time-to-change.org.uk/media-advice/media-events> [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Considered: [http://www.actionaid.org.uk/bollocks-to-poverty](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.actionaid.org.uk%2Fbollocks-to-poverty&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNEwrCprEGlpMpnsbeffB8AuDcM3EQ); [http://ageukblog.org.uk/](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fageukblog.org.uk%2F&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNFqJypSQBtImdJRGq8Q11L8yjF9nw); [https://www.concern.net/news-blogs/region/uk](https://www.google.com/url?q=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.concern.net%2Fnews-blogs%2Fregion%2Fuk&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNGb4AI_wxYf559wo6-fLQ6qsEL4sA) [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. 8 champions have their dates of birth listed as 1982 or later; 8 have no recorded date of birth. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Birkbeck College provides higher education to 'non-traditional' students in the evenings, and is therefore likely to have a larger proportion of older students, compared to other universities. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Year 1: estimated at 850 people, based on year 2 figures; Year 2: 400 people; Year 3: 120 people [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Compared with: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E6msm1rKlto&feature=share&list=UUBt4eRgZAcwfbeT5AiElVWA&index=16>; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8FY0zJdkPaQ&feature=share&list=UUsl2tXOF3Y69hNTYmwylOug&index=7>; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VESOthDR9t4&feature=share&list=UUuotZ_gy7TTUD7oy0Br3JKA&index=1> [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Of those who included their date of birth when signing the petition, over 2,200 were aged 18-30 years. A large number of people did not include their year of birth as some consider it sensitive information and so it is not mandatory. However, it is estimated that around 3,000 young people signed. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Around two-thirds (65%) of Europeans ages 65-74 have never used the Internet

    <http://www.carenetproject.eu/silver-surfing-helping-older-people-get-online-with-internet-button/> [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Unfortunately, the young people involved in wider campaign activities (result 2) who were surveyed did not differentiate between older people in their own country and in developing countries, and so their responses could not be included in this analysis. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. The literature states that 20,000 people and 2000 young people were involved in the campaign, which seems extremely high, given previous years. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Part of a different programme of work within HelpAge that was launched the same week [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. While we can say that there are currently 577 million people aged over 60 in the developing world (according to UNDESA 2012) it is unfortunately not possible to estimate a number of people affected and thus give a value for money calculation without a much more detailed analysis of how these documents will shape future EU policy and in which countries that policy would be targeted. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)