**Meeting:**

Seventy-first World Health Assembly (A71/1)

**Agenda Item:**

11.1 Draft thirteenth general programme of work, 2019–2023

**Statement:**

I thank the chair for giving HelpAge International the opportunity to make this statement.

HelpAge commends WHO for addressing the neglect of ageing in the first draft General Programme of Work and welcomes the commitment to supporting the health of older people. Given WHO’s leadership on ageing and health over recent years, we are encouraged to see alignment between the GPW and the strategic objectives on healthy ageing previously set. Recognition of the need to: align health systems to the needs of older populations; develop systems of long-term care; create age-friendly environments; and improve measurement of healthy ageing, is an important step. HelpAge is also pleased to see healthy ageing positioned as central to Universal Health Coverage.

HelpAge welcomes the ongoing work to develop a detailed impact framework for the GPW. We are pleased to see a specific target on older people in need of care. However, we would like to see a greater level of ambition in other parts of the framework. SDG indicators on violence against women and NCDs were adapted to be inclusive of people of all ages. The GPW framework does not follow that lead, instead reverting to a focus on women 15-49 and people aged 30-70, for violence against women and NCDs respectively. HelpAge reiterates its serious concern that WHO continues to emphasise premature mortality, focusing efforts on NCDs towards people up to the age of 70. This risks a skewing of services away from people most affected.

The draft GPW states ‘ensuring healthy ageing is an urgent challenge in all countries’, and commits WHO to provide support. To do this, capacity building will be needed across WHO, particularly at country level. We are concerned that no reference is made to ageing in the financial estimate for the GPW, and request WHO to allocate funding to ensure necessary technical support can be provided.