

UNIT 5:

DEFINING YOUR ISSUE

ADA Campaign Training Manual

UNIT 5: DEFINING YOUR ISSUE



This unit will help participants to picture what their ideal society would look like, and think about what kinds of campaign issues are likely to gain popular support in their context or community.

YOUR VISION FOR SOCIETY

This is a chance for participants to dream, envision and express their wishes for their society. This exercise provides a positive and motivating opener for the following issue analysis exercises.

Envisioning key issues

- What do you want your society to be like?
- What specific features would you actually see in your ideal society?



HelpAge International (Ethiopia)



Exercise 1 – Your ideal society

Work in small groups. Invite participants to take coloured pens, coloured paper, shapes, magazines (with pictures and words), Blu-Tack and masking tape, scissors and flip chart paper. Ask them to create together a picture of their ideal society, showing the things that would secure and protect the rights of older people.

Display the images on the walls of the room. Let participants take a gallery walk and be inspired by the images of their peers and their dreams for their society. As they walk, ask them to:

- 1.** identify a big issue which is getting in the way of achieving this vision, and
- 2.** fix one motivating image they see in their minds, to recall in the midst of their campaigning activities.

CONSIDER YOUR ISSUE

In plenary, ask participants this question: what elements should an issue have to make a successful campaign? Invite, share and compare some of the responses.



Note: Findings from a research study of the private sector in 1996 tell us that companies take notice of campaigns when they contain two or three of the following elements.



Ask participants to guess what the three elements are. Using Handout Unit 5.1, explain what they are:

1. The campaign issue is current and relevant – it reflects modern-day concerns (for example, although slavery still exists, it is hard to campaign on, because many people think slavery is limited to the system in the USA from the 17th to the 19th century, not knowing that it still exists today in different forms and in many countries).
2. The campaign issue is clear.
3. The campaigners are credible – they have a good reputation, they know what they are talking about, and their facts are correct.

ANALYSE YOUR ISSUE AND ITS VIABILITY

In plenary, point out that any campaign is more likely to be successful if it has certain characteristics. Invite participants to give their ideas about what these characteristics might be.



Checklist

(see Handout Unit 5.2)



- A public issue
- An issue about justice, a clear issue
- A certain public awareness about the issue
- Potential for gaining popular support
- Possibility of success
- Possibility of measuring success



Exercise 2 – What matters to us

In pairs or threes, ask people to share the most pressing issues facing older people in their communities. Being mindful of participants' literacy levels, ask the small groups to write their issues separately on large coloured Post-its. Post these on a wall or flip chart paper.

Group them into similar topic areas. Stand and review together. Probe to see if there are any obvious omissions – refer to the vision picture to see if any issues getting in the way of achieving this vision have been missed. Note priority issues.



Analysing your campaign issue (part 1)

Introduce the table opposite (Handout Unit 5.3), drawn out on large flip chart paper. Clarify the meaning of each statement from 1-10. Explain that small groups will rank two issues each using this table.



Exercise 3 – Key considerations about your campaign issue

Divide participants into small groups of three or four people. Invite each group to choose one person to offer two issues. The group will work on these two issues and apply the list of considerations in the table to first one, then the other. Ask the groups to take note of any interesting observations or questions about the statements.

Circle your chosen number for each consideration, for both of the two chosen issues:

1 = low 2 = moderate 3 = high 4 = very high

Considerations	Issue 1	Issue 2	Notes
1. Importance of the issue	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	
2. Is it an issue about justice or equality	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	
3. Clarity of the issue	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	
4. Level of awareness of the issue	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	
5. Ease of mobilising popular support	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	
6. Choice of timing	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	
7. Realisation of success	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	
8. Possibility of measuring success	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	
9. It strengthens campaigners' capacity and self-confidence	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	
10. Potential for forming partnerships and/or coalitions	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	
Total points			

In plenary, invite observations from each group about this exercise. Ask questions to prompt a dialogue, such as:

- What surprised you?
- What did the exercise reveal to you about the chosen issues?
- What changed in your assessment of those issues?
- Did the issue you first favoured come out with the most or the least points?
- How might you use this information when you discuss your possible campaign issues with your friends, relatives, and in your communities?



HelpAge International (Kyrgyzstan)



Exercise 4 – Continuing to consider your campaign issue

Return to the same groups. Then ask the person who suggested the issues that were discussed to move to a new group. Let them share the issue that had the highest score in the previous group and convince the new group of its potential for success. Invite the new groups to listen attentively, ask probing questions, and lend support to the development of this campaign issue.

In plenary, invite all those who were not presenting the issues to think about how they might win more support for their own issues, in light of the small group discussions that have just taken place. Ask them: can you relate the discussion to challenges and opportunities in your own campaign issues? Will such a rating table be useful?



Exercise 5 – How sure are you about working on your chosen issue?

Divide participants into small groups again. Ask each group to think of up to three issues that they are keen to campaign on. Distribute the table from Handout Unit 5.4, written out on flipchart paper, to each group to work on together. Ensure that they work through each issue by applying the following criteria to it. Write a tick or a cross against each statement. The issue with the largest number of ticks is likely to have the greatest potential for positive results.

Name of issue

Criteria	Tick or cross
You know what you want to change, why and how it should change	
Change will result in real improvement in people's lives	
This helps people to understand their democratic rights	
There are opportunities to do something about it	
It is a "root" issue – dealing with it successfully will unlock possibilities for other changes	
Your supporters will back your work on the issue	
The risks involved in addressing the issue are manageable	
Your group has a contribution to make on the issue and can bring added value to it (expertise, experience or analysis)	
You believe it is an issue that affects many people	



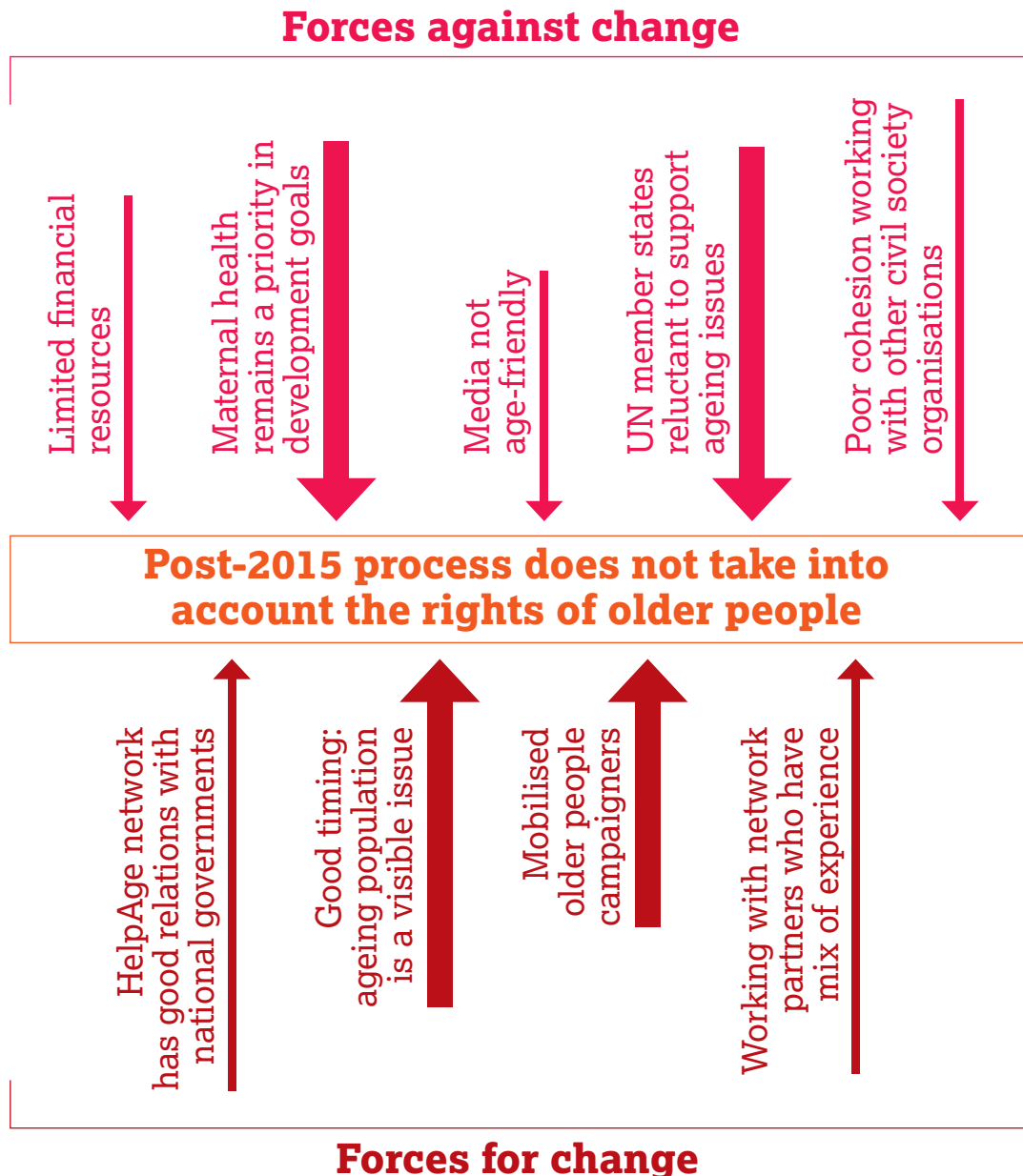
Red Mayor La Plata (Argentina)



Analysing your campaign issue (part 2)

In plenary, explain that campaigners often apply a “force-field analysis” tool to a selected campaign issue. Present the force-field analysis on flip chart paper (see Handout Unit 5.5b).

Here is an example:





Exercise 6 – Force-field analysis



Decide, as a group, on a clear campaign issue that has relevance for most of the group. For example, it may be health insurance or free transport for older people. Or, to demonstrate the tool more simply at first, choose a simple statement such as: “I will eat a delicious meal this evening”.



Using Handout Unit 5.5b, write the campaign issue, or the simple statement, in the horizontal box of the large force-field analysis diagram.

Talk through the forces that are acting against this campaign being won; these are the “forces against”. Write down the ones you identify along the vertical arrows. Likewise, talk through the forces that are in support of the campaign being won. Write these on the vertical arrows under “forces for”. Next, revisit each one and make the arrow lines thicker for the strongest forces that are for and against change.

Allow 15-20 minutes for participants to have a walk, or break, or sit alone and reflect on this tool as it might apply to their own issue(s). After this individual reflection time, bring the group back to plenary.



In plenary, and using the checklist in Handout Unit 5.5a, invite participants to give their reflections and collectively sum up the benefits of this tool.



HelpAge Ghana



Checklist

The benefits of using the force-field analysis tool include:

- quick to use
- not wordy
- useful visual image
- low-tech
- can be used to pool ideas in a group
- captures the things for and against the campaign together – and in contrast to one another
- helps to see where the strongest forces are
- points you towards how to plan your campaign.



Exercise 7 – Positioning your issue

In plenary, introduce the following example (Handout Unit 5.6) to highlight ways to position an issue and related campaign options.



Note: This exercise can be treated as individual reading – be sensitive to literacy levels and omit if necessary.



HelpAge International (Cambodia)

Positioning your issue

Using, as an example, the issue of poor primary healthcare services, discuss issues and brainstorm campaign options.

	Issues	Options on which to campaign
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understaffed clinics, low morale among health workers (low wages, lack of training and equipment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educate people about their right to healthcare• Grassroots advocacy to hold district-level administration accountable
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Government has other priorities and poor older people who need healthcare do not know about their rights and do not demand their entitlement to basic services• “Brain-drain” of skilled personnel to developed countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reform national health policy to emphasise primary and preventive care• Increase national and district health budgets• Increase health workers’ pay and qualifications
International	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• International financial institutions’ policies on user fees and privatisation, inadequate healthcare, high infant mortality, high prevalence of infectious diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Persuade international financial institutions to change policies regarding healthcare delivery, using economic and social arguments



Wrap up: Please refer to facilitators' notes in Appendix A for guidance on monitoring progress and embedding learning.



HelpAge International (Bolivia)

UNIT 5:

HANDOUTS



Handout Unit 5.1

Findings from a research study of the private sector in 1996 tell us that companies take notice of campaigns when they contain two or three of these elements:

- 1.** The campaign issue is current and relevant – it reflects modern-day concerns (for example, although slavery still exists, it is hard to campaign on, because many people think slavery is limited to the system in the USA from the 17th to the 19th century, not knowing that it still exists today in different forms and in many countries).
- 2.** The campaign issue is clear.
- 3.** The campaigners are credible – they have a good reputation, they know what they are talking about, and their facts are correct.





Handout Unit 5.2

Any campaign issue is more likely to be successful if it has certain characteristics.

These might include:

- a public issue
- an issue about justice, a clear issue
- a certain public awareness about the issue
- potential for gaining popular support
- possibility of success
- possibility of measuring success.





Handout Unit 5.3

Examining your chosen campaign issue, circle your chosen number for each consideration:

1 = low 2 = moderate 3 = high 4 = very high

Considerations	Issue 1	Issue 2	Notes
1. Importance of the issue	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	
2. Is it an issue about justice or equality	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	
3. Clarity of the issue	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	
4. Level of awareness of the issue	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	
5. Ease of mobilising popular support	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	
6. Choice of timing	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	
7. Realisation of success	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	
8. Possibility of measuring success	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	
9. It strengthens campaigners' capacity and self-confidence	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	
10. Potential for forming partnerships and/or coalitions	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	
Total points			



Handout Unit 5.4

Name of issue

Criteria	Tick or cross
You know what you want to change, why and how it should change	
Change will result in real improvement in people's lives	
This helps people to understand their democratic rights	
There are opportunities to do something about it	
It is a "root" issue – dealing with it successfully will unlock possibilities for other changes	
Your supporters will back your work on the issue	
The risks involved in addressing the issue are manageable	
Your group has a contribution to make on the issue and can bring added value to it (expertise, experience or analysis)	
You believe it is an issue that affects many people	



Handout Unit 5.5a

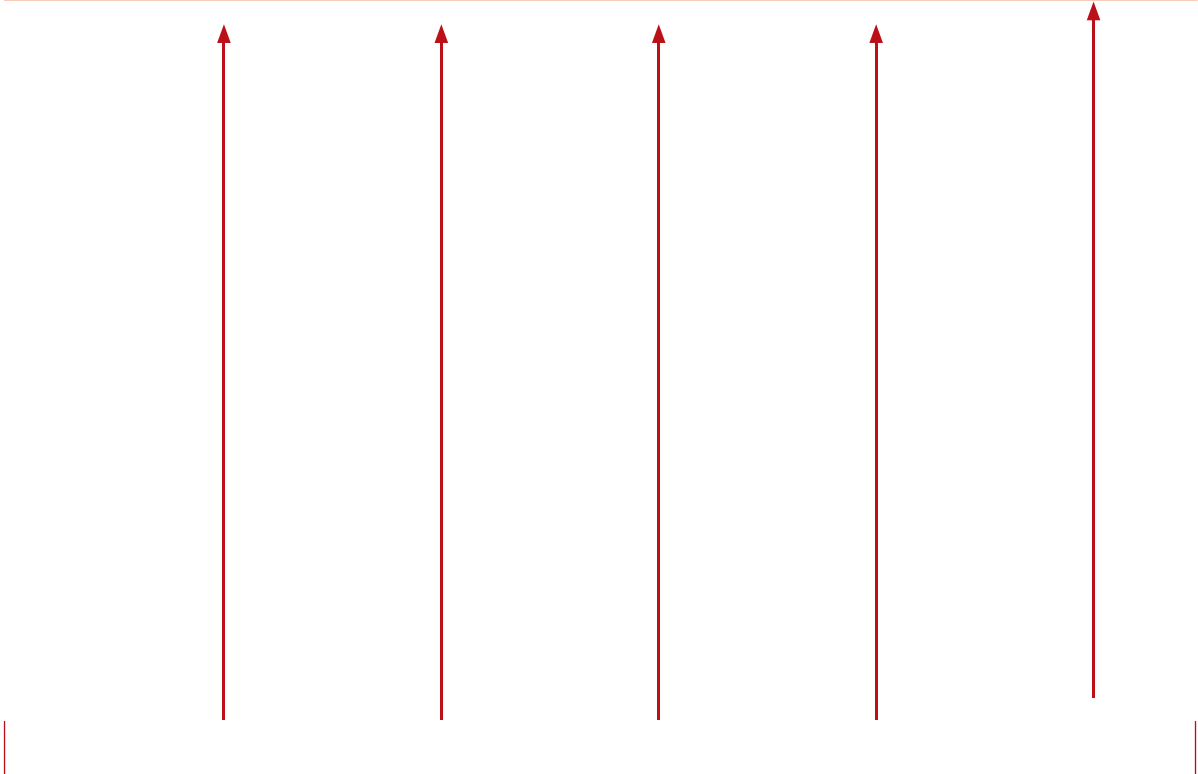
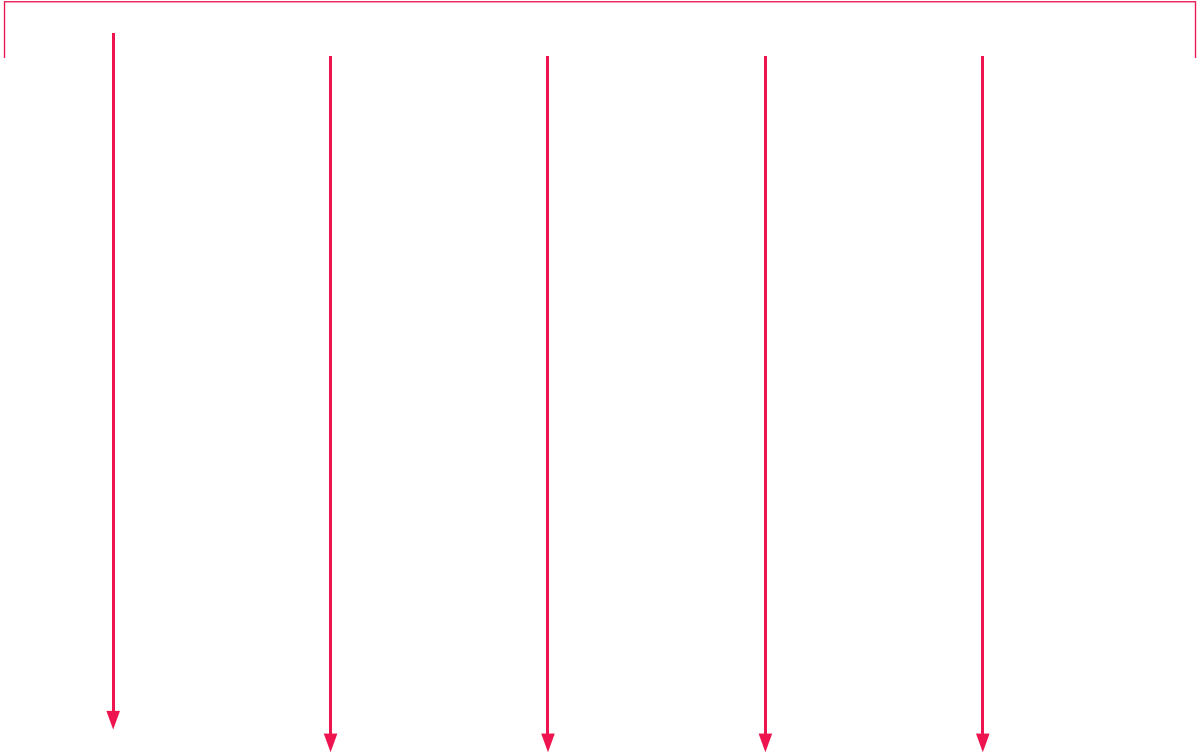
The benefits of using the force-field analysis tool include:

- quick to use
- not wordy
- useful visual image
- low-tech
- can be used to pool ideas in a group
- captures the things for and against the campaign together – and in contrast to one another
- helps to see where the strongest forces are
- points you towards how to plan your campaign.



Handout Unit 5.5b

Forces against change



Forces for change



Handout Unit 5.6

Positioning your issue

Using, as an example, the issue of poor primary healthcare services:

	Issues	Options on which to campaign
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understaffed clinics, low morale among health workers (low wages, lack of training and equipment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educate people about their right to healthcare• Grassroots advocacy to hold district-level administration accountable
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Government has other priorities and poor older people who need healthcare do not know about their rights and do not demand their entitlement to basic services• “Brain-drain” of skilled personnel to developed countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reform national health policy to emphasise primary and preventive care• Increase national and district health budgets• Increase health workers’ pay and qualifications
International	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• International financial institutions’ policies on user fees and privatisation, inadequate healthcare, high infant mortality, high prevalence of infectious diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Persuade international financial institutions to change policies regarding healthcare delivery, using economic and social arguments



HelpAge International (Bolivia)



Handout Unit 5.7

Older people are at the heart of campaigns work. Through this training and the ongoing engagement of older people, we are growing a global movement of campaigners who will portray the characteristics listed below.

PROFILE OF AN OLDER PERSON CAMPAIGNER

YOU

...CAN DIALOGUE AND DEBATE AND PERSUADE AND YOU CAN WIN!

...ARE SURE TO MAINTAIN AND ATTEND TO YOUR GROUP

...HAVE A UNIQUE PLACE TO SPEAK CREDIBLY ABOUT ISSUES – BECAUSE YOU EXPERIENCE THEM

...ARE KEEN TO INFORM OTHERS ABOUT OLDER PEOPLE AND THEIR REALITIES

...HAVE A HEART TO DEVELOP YOUR GROUP

...ALLOW PEOPLE TO SELF-IMPROVE TOGETHER

...ARE STRONG WHEN YOU CONSIDER YOUR OWN VALUES, CULTURE AND HISTORY

...ARE READY TO PARTICIPATE

...ARE A GOOD ANCHOR FOR YOUR GROUP

...UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT, ESPECIALLY THE POLITICAL CONTEXT

...ARE A VALUABLE SPOKESPERSON FOR THE MEDIA

...CAN SPEAK ABOUT YOUR LIFE AND THE CHALLENGES YOU FACE IN AN ENGAGING WAY

...SHOW EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP IN THE GROUP OR MOVEMENT

...DEPEND ON THE SOURCE OF POWER WITHIN YOURSELF

PROFILE OF AN OLDER PERSON CAMPAIGNER RHODA NGIMA, 77, KENYA



HelpAge Kenya

“We have been removed from a very dark pit and brought to the surface where there is light. ADA has made me an ambassador to spread news about older people. I have learnt that even in older age I am able to do something worthwhile and constructive for my country.”

Rhoda Ngima

Rhoda has long been a pivotal figure in her church and community, where she brings people together, inspiring them to stay strong and keep going through life’s challenges. She’s now bringing her leadership experience and social commitment to ADA, where she’s already made a big impact.

In 2009, she led an ADA delegation to meet the Prime Minister. And the following year, she met the Minister for Gender, Children and Social Development to explain the benefits of increasing pensions. After the meeting, the Government agreed to raise pension payments for all older people in Kenya.

In 2012, Rhoda travelled to Brussels where she met several Members of the European Parliament. In her speech, she spoke about her life in Kenya and the challenges older people face in developing countries, urging the European Union not to forget her generation.

She passionately believes that the world’s older people should unite as one voice.



HelpAge Kenya

This is one unit from a set that makes up the ADA Campaign Training Manual. You can download single units, or the full manual from:

www.agedemandsaction.org

HelpAge International, PO Box 70156, London WC1A 9GB, UK
Tel +44 (0)20 7278 7778 Fax +44 (0)20 7387 6992

www.helpage.org info@helpage.org

Registered charity no. 288180

Any parts of this publication may be reproduced for non-profit purposes unless indicated otherwise. If used in other materials, please clearly credit HelpAge International and send us a link.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License. HelpAge International 2014.



This manual was produced with the financial assistance of the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of HelpAge International and do not necessarily reflect the views of BMZ.



ADA
Age Demands Action

**HelpAge
International**
global network

Age Demands Action is a HelpAge global network campaign