

# Ageing and Development

News and analysis of issues affecting the lives of older people

Issue 24 August 2008



African governments have recommended that social protection should be recognised as a state obligation in order to reach all citizens.

## Social protection in Africa

**A groundbreaking series of national and regional consultations on social protection in Africa has concluded with a recommendation by 38 African governments that social protection should be recognised as a right and a state obligation in order to reach the poorest and most vulnerable children, older people and those living with disabilities.**

Between March and June 2008, six national consultations were held in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Tunisia. These were followed by three regional expert meetings in Egypt, Senegal and Uganda. The events were organised by the Social Affairs Division of the African Union Commission in collaboration with HelpAge International and host governments.

The meetings take forward commitments made in 2006 in

Livingstone, Zambia and Yaoundé, Cameroon, when African governments agreed to further social protection in support of their most disadvantaged citizens through mechanisms such as social pensions, child and disability grants and other cash transfers.

The 2008 consultations brought together senior representatives from ministries of social development, and planning and finance. Participants also included representatives from civil society, development partners, United Nations agencies, multilateral institutions including the World Bank and the African Development Bank, and the Government of Brazil. Progress, challenges and opportunities for extending social protection across Africa were reviewed.

Recommendations from the regional expert meetings included building a political consensus for social protection, developing costed national plans based on

a minimum package of social protection, strengthening technical capacity, expertise and mechanisms of coordination, awareness raising and measuring impact. The meetings acknowledged the African Union's leadership in embedding social protection into national and regional development plans.

The recommendations will be consolidated into a report for review at the first-ever African Union conference of ministers in charge of social development, to be held in Namibia in October 2008.

The conference, with the theme 'Towards a Sustainable Development Agenda for Africa', will review progress on implementing social development commitments across Africa, and discuss a revised social policy framework for adoption by member states, with social protection recommendations embedded into it.

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# News round up

Developments that affect older people's quality of life

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## Older people in world disasters report

**The impact of HIV and AIDS on older people, particularly their role as carers, is pointed out in the World Disasters Report 2008.**

*The World Disasters Report: Focus on HIV and AIDS*, published by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, highlights the need for humanitarian organisations, working with governments and local communities, to scale up programmes on HIV.

The report recognises the rising numbers of orphans being cared for by grandparents. It also refers to older people's role in caring for people with HIV and AIDS, and older people's own susceptibility to HIV infection.

The report calls for service providers to look beyond the most visibly affected groups to find the older men and women caring for the sick, grieving for lost children or resuming a parenting role. It suggests practical ways to support older carers and older people living with HIV and AIDS.

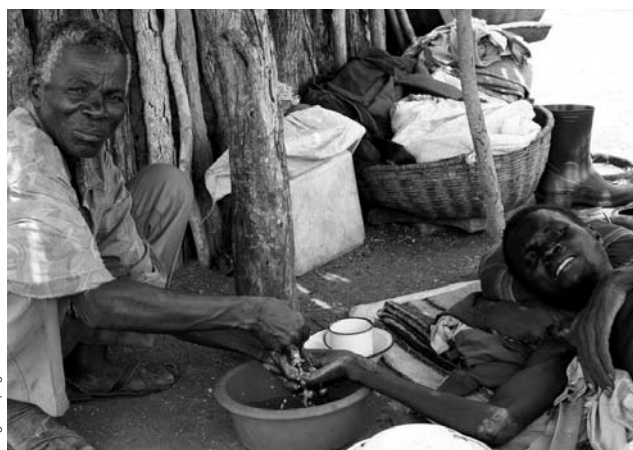
Quotes by older people illustrate how HIV and AIDS affects them emotionally, physically and financially. 'Every morning I wake up thinking about how I will have money for my grandchildren... I can't sleep because I think about it so much,' says a grandmother whose adult child has died.

Another older woman describes the risks to her own health from caring for her HIV-positive daughter: 'Sometimes I would fall down myself

when trying to pick my daughter up and move her,' she says.

A case study of a programme by Oxfam to help people living with HIV to meet their extra nutritional needs also acknowledges older people's role. It comments that the 'low-output' vegetable gardens it is supporting are suited to the physical abilities of older people. It quotes a grandmother whose garden helps to feed 11 grandchildren in her care.

**World Disasters Report 2008: Focus on HIV and AIDS**  
[www.ifrc.org/publicat/wdr2008/summaries.asp](http://www.ifrc.org/publicat/wdr2008/summaries.asp)



Emma Judge/HelpAge International

Look beyond those most visibly affected by AIDS, says disasters report.

## Reducing chronic poverty

**Social protection has a crucial role to play in reducing chronic poverty and should be included in the Millennium Development Goals, says a new report.**

The Chronic Poverty Report 2008-09, *Escaping poverty traps*, points out that achieving the first Millennium Development Goal would still leave some 800 million people living in absolute poverty and deprivation – many of whom will be chronically poor. It recognises older people as one of the groups that make up the chronically poor.

The report draws on a large amount of research conducted over the last few years by the

Chronic Poverty Research Centre, an international partnership of universities, research institutes and NGOs, and many others concerned with ending poverty.

It argues that social protection protects poor people from shocks and reduces their extreme vulnerability; helps them conserve and accumulate assets so that they can improve their livelihoods and productivity; and contributes to transforming economic and social relations in ways that strengthen the longer-term livelihood prospects of the poor and chronically poor.

Eradicating chronic poverty by 2025 is a feasible goal if national

governments and international organisations make the necessary political commitments and resource allocations, says the report.

The report calls to extend the Millennium Development Goals beyond 2015 to fully incorporate a global assault on chronic poverty. This includes setting the goal of access to basic social protection for all poor and vulnerable people by 2020.

**Chronic Poverty Report 2008-09: Escaping poverty traps**  
[www.chronicpoverty.org/cpra-front.php](http://www.chronicpoverty.org/cpra-front.php)

See also *Briefing on page 6*.

## Comment

**Data: a question of age**

Three pieces in this issue highlight the need for data on older people. The global food crisis is adding millions to those already living in hunger. Governments need to recognise how different age

groups are affected, and make sure that older-headed households are included in their responses.

After natural disasters such as the recent cyclone in Myanmar, older people's needs and potential contribution are generally overlooked. Collecting data broken down by age and sex is essential for preparing well-targeted responses.

And when it comes to measuring progress in meeting international commitments on HIV and AIDS, older people's inclusion is important. Older people play a vital role as carers, and are also at risk of infection. Yet they are missing from the core UNGASS indicators, and so are largely neglected in national and international responses.

This September, the UN is organising a mid-term review of progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. Thought needs to be given to how effective this can be unless all age groups are represented.

Richard Blewitt  
Chief Executive Officer  
HelpAge International

# AIDS indicators miss older people

**Calls to recognise the role of older people in the response to HIV and AIDS were made at a UN high-level meeting on AIDS in New York in June.**

Representatives of UN member states and civil society organisations came together to review progress in implementing the 2001 UNGASS Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the 2006 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS.

None of the 25 core indicators used by UNAIDS to monitor progress towards these commitments includes people over the age of 49. Nor do the indicators recognise older people's role in providing care.

These omissions contribute to a lack of awareness of the impact of HIV and AIDS on older people, and the consequent neglect of older people in national and international responses to the pandemic.

Earlier in 2008, the UNAIDS regional office for southern and eastern Africa asked HelpAge International to review all national progress reports from the region. The analysis found very little

evidence of the inclusion of older people in national responses.

At the high-level meeting, HelpAge International lobbied for recognition of older people's role in response to HIV and AIDS, and for changes to four of the core indicators.

These points were picked up in a number of panel presentations. In a presentation on long-term responses, Nicola Brennan of Irish Aid, called for more attention to be given to care and support.

'It's young girls, it's older women, that are bearing the brunt of caring for people living with HIV and AIDS, dying of AIDS illnesses,' she said. 'We need more focus in this particular area.'

Support for older carers was also called for by Dr Lydia Mungherera of TASO, Uganda in a presentation on universal access. 'Often the old people, especially grandmothers, look after orphans, and help these children to adhere to treatment,' she said. 'Social support policies which enable communities to

carry out these roles effectively need to be put in place as a matter of urgency.'

**'It's young girls, it's older women that are caring for people with HIV... we need more focus in this area...'**

*Nicola Brennan, Irish Aid*



Nile Spreague/HelpAge International

**Older people want to learn about AIDS but are generally missed out.**

In a presentation on gender equality, Malcolm McNeil, Head of the AIDS and Reproductive Health Team at DFID, UK advocated for increased social protection programmes for older carers. 'We are also concerned about elderly caregivers and how they are to receive the financial support needed, perhaps through pensions,' he said.

**UNGASS indicators: where are the over-50s?**

*HelpAge International, 2008*  
[www.helpage.org/resources/briefings](http://www.helpage.org/resources/briefings)

**More information:**

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Email: [ralbone@helpage.org](mailto:ralbone@helpage.org)

# UK strategy recognises older carers

**The UK Government's new strategy to halt and reverse the spread of HIV in the developing world calls for social assistance programmes to mitigate the impact of the epidemic, including social pensions to support older carers.**

The strategy, launched in June, recognises that HIV leaves large numbers of older people caring for orphans. It recommends regular and predictable cash transfers to mitigate the impact of AIDS on

children and their carers, who are often older women.

The strategy calls for ministries of social welfare to be supported to ensure that appropriate and well-targeted social assistance programmes (such as old-age pensions or child support grants) are in place, as part of a comprehensive system of care and support.

It also calls for neglected groups, including older people, to access prevention, treatment and care

programmes. It refers to data from Uganda which shows that new infections are occurring in older age groups, often among those in stable sexual partnerships.

HelpAge International welcomes the UK Government's renewed commitment to tackling HIV and AIDS. 'We are particularly pleased that the Government acknowledges the importance of social protection,' says Rachel Albone, HelpAge International's HIV and AIDS policy advisor.

'However, greater attention needs to be given to the issue of care and support, as the strategy focuses mainly on care of people living with HIV. Care and support needs to be provided not only to people living with HIV and AIDS, but also to those who are caring for them.'

**Achieving universal access – the UK's strategy for halting and reversing the spread of HIV in the developing world**

[www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/achieving-universal-access.pdf](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/achieving-universal-access.pdf)

# News round up

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## Women's rights in Tanzania

**Violence against older women, rights to property and inheritance, and access to healthcare for older women caring for people living with HIV and AIDS are the subject of recommendations to the Tanzanian government.**

These issues were highlighted in an oral statement by HelpAge International at the 41st session of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in New York in July.

The committee monitors implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, which the Tanzanian government ratified in 1985.

The committee will make a series of recommendations on how the government can better realise women's rights, taking into account HelpAge International's statement and a written submission. The submission, endorsed by 12 Tanzanian organisations working

on older women's issues, shows that older women's experience of ageing in Tanzania is markedly different from that of older men. They are less likely to remarry after the death of a partner, and as widows have a considerably lower status in society.

Widows in Tanzania are denied the right to inherit common assets such as a house or land. Low levels of literacy contribute to a lack of knowledge of legal rights. In some parts of Tanzania, gender-based violence is occurring against older women accused of witchcraft.

HelpAge International's submission calls on the Tanzanian government to issue a policy statement which commits district councils to

introduce measures that challenge and address witchcraft accusation-related violence. HelpAge International is also urging for the introduction of a non-discriminatory inheritance law and legislation to criminalise the seizure of property on the death of a spouse.

Access to healthcare for older women caring for people with HIV and AIDS is another important area. Nearly two-thirds of children who have lost both parents to AIDS are living in households headed by older people. The emotional and financial impact of this can be considerable, particularly for older widows without a source of regular income. HelpAge International has recommended that the Tanzanian government improves older women carers' access to medication, provides support and information, and educates them about HIV and AIDS.

**More information:**  
CEDAW  
[www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw)



Emma Judge/HelpAge International

**Cecilia's story**  
Cecilia was viciously attacked in her home in northern Tanzania in 2007. 'A strange man came to the village when it was almost dark. He said he was looking for a place to sleep. I told him I didn't have a place but maybe he could stay with my son. 'He had a machete in his hand but I didn't notice it at the time. I showed him my son's place and when I was coming back he followed me and started to cut my head with his machete. People said that I was attacked because I was a witch. Others said it was because I had land.'

## Social transfers course in Thailand

**A two-week course on designing and implementing social transfer programmes will be held in Thailand in November.**

The course is offered by HelpAge International and the Economic Policy Research Institute (EPRI), together with the University of Maastricht and the University of Cape Town. It is aimed at government officials and policy-makers, representatives of bilateral and multilateral agencies, and staff of non-governmental organisations. It runs from 26 October to 9 November in Chiang Mai.

Topics include the role of cash transfers in social protection, identifying appropriate social transfer mechanisms, designing programmes, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and case studies of successful programmes around the world.

The course is offered in partnership with the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) in Sussex, with funding from DFID. It leads to joint accreditation by Maastricht and Cape Town universities. The fee is €2,880 for tuition and €1,730 for accommodation, meals and in-country travel, including visits to social transfer schemes.

**To apply online:**  
Visit the EPRI website  
[www.epri.org.za/course06ChiangMai2.htm](http://www.epri.org.za/course06ChiangMai2.htm)

**More information:**  
Brooks Dodge, HelpAge International Asia/Pacific Regional Development Centre  
Email: [asiacourse@helpageasia.org](mailto:asiacourse@helpageasia.org)

## Study of impact on economic growth

**The extent to which the social pension fosters economic growth through employment creation and local spending is the subject of new research in South Africa.**

The 18-month programme, which started in July 2008, is being carried out by HelpAge International in association with the Economic Policy Research Institute (EPRI) of South Africa and the Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) at the University of Western Cape, South Africa. It is funded by USAID.

The research starts with an analysis of the impact of the social

pension on economic growth, based on data from South Africa's general household survey.

This is followed by interviews with households receiving the social pension to examine the relationship between the social pension and economic growth, and factors that undermine the capacity of the social pension to stimulate economic growth.

# Relief in China and Myanmar

**Older people affected by the recent cyclone in Myanmar and earthquake in China are receiving aid from HelpAge International's partners.**

Cyclone Nargis, which struck Myanmar on 3 May, left 138,000 people dead or missing and many more displaced. An estimated 170,000 older people were affected. HelpAge International teamed up with the YMCA in Yangon to mobilise volunteers to distribute aid to nearly 50,000 people, including 4,300 older people in three townships.

An assessment of older people's needs, carried out by HelpAge International, showed that very little data exists on older people. Of a small sample of older people interviewed, most said they were receiving support from their families. Just over two-thirds said they had lost their source of income. Nearly two-thirds said they wanted psychosocial support.

HelpAge International is now supporting a longer-term rehabilitation programme with the YMCA in two townships.

The earthquake that struck China's Sichuan Province on 12 May left more than 67,000 people dead and 15 million displaced. HelpAge International provided cash grants to 100 older people and their families in two townships where it has been working with Sichuan University since 2003 to develop older people's associations.

HelpAge International also provided materials on older people in emergencies for the university to translate into Chinese.

HelpAge International's relief work in Myanmar and China has been

supported by Help the Aged, the Disasters Emergency Committee and Reuters Foundation.



HelpAge International

Two generations support each other after the cyclone in Myanmar.

## Update on pensions

**The governments of Malawi, India, Paraguay and Ecuador have recently announced plans to introduce or extend social pension schemes.**

Plans to introduce a social pension for all older people in **Malawi** were announced in May by Clement Khembo, Minister of Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly, according to the *Malawi Daily Times*. The paper reports that Malawi is seeking funding from donors for the first five to ten years.

In **India**, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh launched the Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme in November 2007 to provide a monthly pension of Rs400 (US\$9.3) to everyone aged 65 and over who is living below the poverty line.

The new scheme marks a significant extension of the original scheme. This was launched in 1995 to provide Rs75 (US\$1.7)

a month to people aged 65 and over who were destitute (having no source of income or family support). The new scheme is expected to cover 15 million people, compared with 3.5 million for the original scheme. It is funded equally by the central and state governments.

Launching the new scheme, Dr Singh commented that rapid urbanisation, growth of nuclear families and increasing longevity had made it difficult for older people to sustain themselves, making it necessary to have modern systems of social security.

In Latin America, income security for older people is generally poor. In recent months, however, there has been growing interest in

providing more comprehensive social protection in response to persistent poverty despite economic growth.

The government of **Paraguay**, which has no social protection measures for older people, has been discussing options for a non-contributory pension. These are likely to be taken forward by the recently-elected new government when it takes over in August.

In **Ecuador**, the government is considering replacing the means-tested pension with a universal scheme. How this goes forward will depend on the outcome of the current constitutional process, which is due to produce a new constitution in July.

## Diary

■ The ILO's Decent Work Agenda has been incorporated into EU development policies. In developing countries, many people work well into old age in informal jobs and most lack social protection. Older people in Bangladesh, Peru and Uganda are preparing to present their issues to politicians in Germany and the Czech Republic over the next two years and recommend how the ILO's campaign can support them. The initiative is coordinated by HelpAge International's partners in the five countries concerned, with funding from the EU.

■ People over 60 who are diagnosed with HIV are four times more likely to die very soon after their diagnosis than people in their twenties and thirties. However, the success of antiretroviral treatment is similar in the two age groups. These findings, from a small sample in Brazil, are reported in the *International Journal of STD & AIDS*. They suggest that older people are more likely to be tested for HIV only when they become ill and are admitted to hospital. And by highlighting equal treatment success rates, they stress the need for improved access to treatment for the over-60s.

■ The new Universal Periodic Review of the UN Human Rights Council is considering evidence of discrimination and abuse experienced by older women in Burkina Faso. Women are often subject to witchcraft allegations in response to disasters such as crop failures. Older women, particularly those unprotected by male relatives, are especially vulnerable. The council will make recommendations in response to the submission by HelpAge International at its third session in December 2008.

# Briefing

Analysis of current topics in ageing

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## Facing the global food crisis

**Anna Pearson discusses the causes and consequences of the global food crisis, and explains how social protection schemes can cushion its effects.**

Continuing inflation of international food and oil prices is causing an escalating food crisis in the developing world. Even before these rises, 854 million people lived in chronic hunger – more than the combined populations of the European Union, Canada and the USA.<sup>1</sup> Estimates now suggest a further 290 million people are facing an immediate threat of hunger.<sup>2</sup>

As many older people lack any basic income, and access to decent work, they are one of the groups most vulnerable to the food crisis. And as small-scale producers of food, carers of children and respected members of communities, they are also key to a successful response.

**How social protection helps**  
Since Lesotho introduced a social pension in 2004, the proportion of older people who report feeling hungry at least some of the time has fallen from 48 per cent to 19 per cent.

The pension is helping to cushion older people at least to some extent from the current food price rises and preventing hunger levels from returning to pre-pension levels. Without the pension, high food prices could quickly have led to a majority of older people living in hunger, and many more becoming chronically hungry.

The *Oportunidades* scheme in Mexico provides cash to poor families. In 2008 the amount was increased to help recipients cope with rising food prices. Having a social protection scheme already in place enabled the government to respond quickly to the food crisis without having to set up new mechanisms.

### Current causes

The current crisis has been caused by a mix of recent changes in world demand for food and its production, combined with underlying problems affecting countries in the developing world.

Grains such as maize and wheat, as well as cooking oil, are staple foods for the world's poor. However, growing prosperity in parts of Asia has led to higher consumption of meat and dairy products, similar to that in the developed world. As a result, more grain is being used to feed animals, leaving less for human consumption.

At the same time, grains and vegetable oils are being converted into biofuel to meet the world's growing energy needs, especially as concerns grow about climate change and the high price of fuel oil. Higher oil prices also lead directly to higher food prices, because derivatives of oil are used all through the food production chain.

Perhaps the most odious factor both causing and reinforcing the current food crisis is the response of developed world financial markets to falling property values and financial-based shares. Some traders are investing in oil stocks to capitalise on their rising value, thereby further driving up prices of fuel oil and consequently staple foods.

### Not a new problem

While the current situation is particularly severe, food crises have occurred repeatedly in recent decades. However, they have increased in frequency from an average of 15 a year in the 1980s to more than 30 a year since



Nile Sprague/HelpAge International

Investing in income security helps subsistence farmers be more productive.

2000.<sup>3</sup> While conflict continues to be a cause of some of these crises, droughts, floods and other climate shocks have increasingly played a part in reducing harvests across the world.

Small-scale farmers are the main source of production of the world's food. For instance, about 80 per cent of the world's rice is grown by small-scale farmers in low-income countries. However, rapid urbanisation in many countries, along with the impact of HIV and AIDS, particularly in Africa, has for some time now been reducing the numbers and productivity of small-scale farmers.

In many parts of the world, conflict also continues to disrupt the production and distribution of vital foodstuffs. People are often forced to leave their land and therefore stop producing food. In addition, once food distribution comes under military control, less is left for women, children and older people.

But it is the high levels of underlying poverty in the developing world that form perhaps the most critical factor in why the current food crisis has become so severe. The link between hunger and poverty is clear, with 90 per cent of those experiencing hunger also living in poverty.<sup>4</sup> Most people who live in hunger and poverty are forced to survive on a day-to-day

basis. Without any regular income, they lack the means to invest, take small economic risks or plan ahead.

Older-headed households are particularly vulnerable as they are usually poorer than average households. For instance, in Malawi poverty rates among older-headed households (which make up one in five of all households) are 5 per cent higher than average.<sup>5</sup>

### Income security

World leaders meeting at the World Food Summit in Rome in June 2008 recognised that increasing production was essential to finding a solution to the crisis. However, consideration of the role of farmers came second to technical discussions about agricultural methods.

Participants failed to recognise that investing in people's income security can help them move away from lower-risk subsistence farming towards investing in higher-yielding seeds, fertilisers or other inputs that may lead to surplus production.

While development discourse too often disregards investments in people's income security, such forms of assistance are taken for granted in the developed world. In nearly all OECD countries, people are protected from poverty in the event of unemployment, disability and old age through social security systems.<sup>6</sup>



These systems also help people cover the costs of raising children. For instance, poverty rates would be more than 50 per cent in the USA and Great Britain without the pension, even though these countries are considered to have ungenerous social security systems.

The role of social security in reducing poverty and contributing to economic stability is widely recognised. Most governments invest more than 5 per cent of GDP in pensions alone. However, 80 per cent of the world's people still lack any access to basic social security, leaving them deeply vulnerable to shocks such as the current food crisis. It is often suggested that poor countries cannot afford to invest in social protection systems. But the question is: can they afford not to?

In developing countries that have invested in universal systems of cash grants, or even in small cash transfer pilots, the benefits have been impressive. Poverty and hunger are reduced, and the injection of cash into communities increases local economic productivity.

■ In **South Africa**, the overall poverty gap has dropped by 20 per cent purely as a result of the social (non-contributory) pension.

■ In **Namibia**, a social pension has increased local spending. It has been commented that half of shops would close if it weren't for pension day.

■ In **Malawi**, for every US\$1 that was transferred to people in an emergency cash transfer pilot, an extra US\$2.1 of additional local economic activity was created.<sup>7</sup>

■ In **Zambia**, 30 per cent of money transferred in the Kalomo cash transfer pilot was invested, for example, in goats, oxen or seeds. Other households have paid neighbours to plough their gardens.<sup>8</sup>

#### Urgent action

In many countries, the impact of food price rises has become so severe that it requires either an emergency response or a scaling up of existing programmes.

Too often, however, older people are neglected in such responses. Neglecting older people's needs not only hurts them, but also hurts communities as a whole. Older people often have a vital role to play in caring for others. They can also play an important part in

emergency responses because of their experience and respect in the community.

HelpAge International believes that governments and the international community must seek to ensure that comprehensive systems of social protection are established in the developing world. At least a portion of the increased aid that the World Food Summit called for should be allocated to this purpose. HelpAge International makes the following recommendations:

#### ■ Include older people

Governments and international agencies that are making urgent responses to the food crisis should include older people in their efforts.

Some developing countries have already established social protection systems that make payments to poor families and older people. For instance, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland all have social pension schemes. In times of crisis, existing mechanisms such as these can be a rapid, efficient and cost-effective way to inject extra cash into communities.

#### ■ Increase social protection

Where the price, rather than the supply, of food is the major issue, governments and international agencies that are looking to spend aid should consider increasing social protection payments to prevent a long-term crisis.

There is now a body of evidence to suggest that social security systems, including social pensions, are affordable in the developing

world. Such systems can help to protect populations from the worst effects of shocks such as rapidly rising food prices or disasters caused by climate change.

Social pensions provide older people with a predictable and reliable income. This enables older people and their families, including children, to improve their diet. It also helps to boost the local economy, supporting local food production and helping to offset the effect of high food prices.

In addition, social protection is not only a vital response to the food crisis, but an essential means for governments to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and the commitments made in the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing.

*Anna Pearson is Senior Policy Advisor, Social Protection, HelpAge International  
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- 1 *The state of food insecurity in the world 2006*, FAO, 2006 (reflects latest data from 2001-03)
- 2 *The time is now*, Oxfam, 2008 (based on UN and World Bank data of poverty rates in countries most vulnerable to food price rises)
- 3 World Food Programme website – emergency operations section, [www.wfp.org](http://www.wfp.org) (18 July 2008)
- 4 FAO website – food assistance
- 5 Integrated household survey 2004-05, Malawi National Statistics Office
- 6 OECD data
- 7 Davies, 2007, cited in RHVP REBA case study brief, *Dowa emergency cash transfer, Malawi*, November 2007
- 8 *Social transfers and chronic poverty: emerging evidence and the challenge ahead*, DFID, 2005



#### A matter of survival

**Rahima (left) is chairperson of a village older people's association in eastern Bangladesh. The association helps members learn about their rights and raise their voices with local authorities, with support from Resource Integration Centre, a Bangladeshi NGO.**

**For example, the Government of Bangladesh provides a means-tested old age allowance, but because of a restricted public budget, only a fraction of eligible older people receive it.**

**Mohomoda, who is a member of the association, is one of those who should receive the allowance. She is a widow in her seventies and has no children, no land and no regular income. She survives mainly by begging for rice.**

**In recent months the cost of rice has increased by about 75 per cent. Even relatively well-off families are feeling the strain and giving less. When interviewed, Mohomoda said she had last purchased food about 15 days previously, when she bought two eggs.**

# Resources

New articles and publications

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## Journal articles

### National

Development and ageing policy in Sub-Saharan Africa: approaches for research and advocacy

Aboderin I, *Global Ageing* 4, 2007, pp 7-22

Re-conceptualising elderliness in South Africa – a theoretical and methodological exploration

Hoffman J R, *Generations Review*, 16:1, 2006, pp 16-19

The demography of aging in Bangladesh: a scenario analysis of the consequences

Khan H T A and Leeson G W, *Hallym Int. J. Ageing* 8:1, 2006, pp 1-21

Population aging in China and its impacts on elderly care: a case study of Guangzhou city

Kwok H, *Hallym International J. Ageing* 8:2, 2006, pp 119-135

### Regional

Ageing in Africa

Turpie I and Hunsinger L, *Geriatrics & Aging*, 10:7, July/August 2007, pp 449-452

### Social pensions

Poverty among the elderly in Sub-Saharan Africa and the role of social pensions

Kakwani N and Subbarao K, *J. Development Studies* 43:6, 2007

## Papers, reports and books

### International

Guide to the national implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing

UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, February 2008

International action on ageing: where do we stand?

Sidorenko A, *The World Demographic Association – HSG Discussion Series on Demographic Issues*, No. 4, 2007

The rights of older persons: collection of international documents  
Dorin I and Mewhinney K (eds), *International Federation on Ageing*, 2008

### National

Pension and social security schemes in Pakistan: some policy options

Mahmood N and Nasir Z M, *Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, Working Paper* 42, 2008

Understanding poverty among the elderly in India: implications for social pension policy

Pal S and Palacios R, *Institute for the Study of Labor, Discussion Paper* No. 3431, April 2008

National strategy on elder abuse: South Africa's strategy on prevention of physical abuse of older persons

Department of Health, *Government of South Africa*, October 2007

Pension reform in China: progress and prospects

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HelpAge International has a vision of a world in which all older people fulfil their potential to lead dignified, healthy and secure lives. HelpAge International is a global network striving for the rights of disadvantaged older people to economic and physical security; healthcare and social services; and support in their caregiving role across the generations.

*Ageing and Development* aims to raise awareness of the contribution, needs and rights of older people and to promote the development of laws and policies supporting older people. It is published twice a year by HelpAge International, with funding from Help the Aged (UK).

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