



Africa Regional and National Humanitarian Plan

Statement to Africa Offices of UN Humanitarian Coordinators/UNHCR Country Representatives

We recognise OCHA's leadership in the development of the UN's Global Humanitarian Response Plan on COVID-19 (GHRP). We welcome the fact that the HRP correctly reflects the additional risks older people face in terms of mortality and morbidity and explicitly included in two of the plan's objectives. However, HelpAge International has major reservations about how these will translate into action at national level and is concerned that the multiple risks facing older people have been poorly understood.

Most concerning, older people have not been specifically included in a list of those 'most affected and at-risk' despite being the group with the highest primary needs in this crisis and despite the fact that they face significant indirect consequences. This is a glaring omission given that donor and operational decisions will undoubtedly be driven by this list and could limit the humanitarian support made available to older people.

HelpAge International has delivered an analysis of the humanitarian plan to fight COVID-19 – launched by the UN Secretary General launched on 25 March along with a US\$2.1 billion appeal – highlighting where the plan fails to deliver protection for older people at risk.

The highest rates of serious illness and mortality globally have been reported for older people and those with serious underlying conditions. Ninety five percent of those who have died from COVID-19 in Europe were over 60, and more than half of those were over 80. Meanwhile, older people already face well-documented, longstanding challenges in accessing health services in both development and humanitarian settings. Ageism and discrimination are already a feature of COVID-19 responses and older people are at high risk of secondary impacts from the crisis. It is no exaggeration to say that the consequences of Covid-19 outbreaks will be devastating for them and their families and communities in the coming months.

We understand that country offices are feeding into an updated Global HRP and national HRPs for COVID-19 are also to be drawn up or adapted in the coming weeks. We would like to offer HelpAge's full support to ensure that the rights and needs of older people are well understood in the preparations for both the

global HRP and national HRPs. Refugee response plans should also reflect that older refugees face significant additional risks.

We are keen to ensure that Humanitarian Response Plans at all levels provide a robust response to the risks faced by older people in this crisis. HelpAge International is asking OCHA and the whole humanitarian community to stand in solidarity with older people and take concrete steps to strengthen the next iteration of the Humanitarian Response Plan. This includes:

- Recognising older people explicitly alongside other population groups considered “most-affected and at risk”.
- Strengthening the humanitarian needs analysis acknowledging that older people face significant health risks, discrimination and longstanding, systematic barriers accessing humanitarian assistance.
- Strengthening implementation plans, guidance and monitoring framework to ensure that measures to reduce risk and respond to older people’s needs are implemented and monitored.
- Ensuring that older people are represented within national level coordination and prioritised within funding mechanisms including pooled fund allocations.

Click on the links below to read more detailed analysis and recommendations on the COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan and Africa Global HelpAge Statement on Older Persons and COVID-19:



Concrete proposals



HRP briefing and



Copy of Recognition



Africa Global

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HelpAge International is a global network of organisations promoting the right of all older people to lead dignified, healthy and secure lives. The HelpAge Africa Hub Secretariat is working with 48 network members and more than 100 network partners spread in 35 countries. More details of the network and how to join visit: <https://www.helpage.org/about-the-global-network/>