

Supporting Evidence-based Policy Making

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Introduction

Key pillars to HelpAge work in advocacy and policy influencing;

OCM – principles; how it works and its effectiveness

Country examples of success

Challenges

Conclusions

Key Pillars -Advocacy & Policy Influencing

Research, policy analyses and reviews - bring core issues to the fore – shedding light and initiating a dialogue towards desired change concerning specific issues.

Involving strategic others – relevant government ministries/departments; reputable research institution; relevant UN Agencies; strategic private sector agencies obviously with older women and men in their communities and households; Examples include work in Malawi; Mozambique; Tanzania; South Africa and Lesotho;

Production of focused pieces of information such as policy briefs, position papers for action including support action such as systems adaptation for inclusion and resourcing including simulations as for universal pensions

Direct engagements via programmes including older citizens monitoring, workshops and stakeholder meetings; decision maker meetings

Supporting campaigns & OCM implementation with older women and men with strategic stakeholders. Focus below is about Older Citizens Monitoring.

Older Citizen Monitoring (OCM)

HelpAge has

Advocacy & Policy Influencing OCM Principles

Participation: Older people assess their own situations, propose solutions to the issues they face, and decide for themselves the focus of their monitoring and advocacy. Although OCM groups own the process of identifying key issues, they usually need support from local civil society organisations and national organisations to translate these issues into monitoring and advocacy targets.

Information: Providing information on rights, laws, policies and services relevant for older people is a fundamental principle of OCM. Older people, local government officers and service providers are often lacking this information which does not filter down from the central government or is not provided in appropriate formats and languages. OCM groups provide information through newspapers, radio, community meetings, posters and home visits. In some cases special training is delivered to groups of older people to take into account the different skills, experiences and literacy levels.

Inclusion: Older people's associations promote inclusion through special efforts to involve older people with a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. Running income generation projects alongside citizen monitoring activities helps involve poorer members of the community in OPAs. Some OPAs have transparent and documented selection criteria for choosing monitors. Others increase the participation of older women by providing training in leadership skills and reserving positions for older women on the executive committees of OPAs and in OCM groups.

Partnership: Partnership with government and civil society organisations is an important principle to strengthen the citizen monitoring process. Being open with the various governments about plans to undertake monitoring and advocacy creates space for dialogue, and helps increase the credibility of monitoring data. Monitors can learn about local government planning and budgeting processes and tailor their monitoring and advocacy. At the same time, local government improves their understanding of older people's rights. Partnership with civil society organisations focused on issues of gender, children, disability, laws and legal processes, helps to fill critical knowledge gaps through sharing of experiences.

Institutionalising: Sustainability of OCM is a key challenge. Whilst OCM is relatively low-cost in terms of material inputs, it is costly in terms of the person-hours required for data collection, data entry, analysis and reporting, particularly when significant support is required from local civil society organisations. Institutionalising the role of older citizen monitoring groups through embedding them in the policies, plans and operational procedures of government schemes is a principle to increase both sustainability and legitimacy of OCM for the long-term.

Older Citizen Monitoring (continued..)

OCM relies on Older

Accountability and Fulfilment for Older People to Raise their Dignity (AFFORD) Programme (Case-Study of Best Practice)

From 2012-2015, through funding from Irish Aid, HelpAge International and its partners implemented the AFFORD Programme in Mozambique, Uganda, Tanzania, and South Africa alongside a development education component in Ireland.

The three target outcomes of the overall programme:

1. Older women and men benefit from more accessible national policy based social protection programmes.
2. Older women and men access age-friendly health/HIV programmes

AFFORD Successes in supporting policy-change

Mozambique

- Policy reforms such as the Law No. 3/2014 which promotes and mainstreams the rights of older people across national public policies and legislation
- Old Age Grant as part of the second National Strategy of Basic Security (2016-2024) is a clear indication that social protection policy analysis leads to inclusion of older people - taking into account the needs and rights of older people. The AFFORD Program took part actively in consultative and discussion meetings between Government and development partners supporting social protection programming and lead to the introduction of Old Age Grant.

AFFORD Successes in supporting policy-change (continued)

Tanzania:

- HelpAge Tanzania brokered the creation and institutionalisation of a Geriatric Unit within

AFFORD Successes in supporting policy-change (continued)

This latter result emerged because of the OCMG exchange gains, which enabled us to collect the access data from more districts including Zanzibar. The over target therefore is an attribute of being able to do assessments in extra 13 districts including 6 districts in Zanzibar via OCMG.

HelpAge Tanzania has capitalised on the decentralisation of decision-making in to influence policy, training and budgets in the interests of older persons at district level by organising and influencing community structures such as Ward Development Councils (WDC) and Local Government Associations.

Other examples of HelpAge Policy influencing work (continued)

Lesotho Ministry of Social Development

- o Lesotho Policy for Older Persons approved by 2014

Global and Regional Protocols and Policies

- o AU -Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa adopted January 2016
- o United Nations Open-ended Working Group on strengthening the protection of the human rights of older persons – work in progress supported by HelpAge.
- o Post-2015 discussions and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) including Sendai Framework
- o Social Protection and Health Care discussions (WHO Global Health Ageing strategy)
- o Data revolution and Global Age Watch Index

Conclusion/ Challenges

Missing Data

- Plugging gaps in Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) to be age-inclusive and representatives of national demographics according to age, gender and disability
- More focused and inclusive analysis of existing researches [DHS, Multi-Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) , and World Values Surveys (WVS)]

Resourcing and improving data collection

- Greater effort and tangible resources need to be committed to conducting researches and studies according to age, gender and disability and the national financial support of the OCM.
- Resourcing and developing data collection instruments and tools that speak to the real and felt needs of all ages.
- Improved national statistical capacity and the removal of age caps and age brackets to ensure national development plans and sector plans are fully inclusive of people of all ages
- Reducing the digital divide: Adapting existing data collection tools to connect with ICT platforms and mechanisms that are accessible to older women and men.
- Strengthen collaboration with UN agencies, development organizations and civil society to generate reliable data and information.