

Age Demands Action Campaigns Toolkit 2018

International Women's Day, ADA on Health, ADA on Rights

Older people's voices must be heard at the United Nations Open-ended Working Group on Ageing



ADA is changing...

This year we are reviewing Age Demands Action to see how effective it is as a campaigning platform for older people.

The Open-ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWG) is fast approaching. Whilst we await the recommendations from the review, we want to use the upcoming ADA campaign days to make sure older people's voices are heard at the OEWG in July.

We have three campaign days before the next OEWG meeting. These are: International Women's Day, World Health Day (ADA on Health) and World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (ADA on Rights).

These are key moments for you to mobilise older people to call on their governments to contribute to the OEWG.

You need to fill in one application form to receive funding for ADA on Health and/or ADA on Rights. No funding is available for International Women's Day.

Introduction

Age Demands Action (ADA) started in 2007 in 27 countries and now takes place in over 55 countries every year. ADA challenges age discrimination and fights for the rights of older people. Older people are at the heart of ADA since they are best suited to become activists on ageing issues and are passionate advocates for change in their countries.

This toolkit will help you to plan your campaign activities. It provides key messages to help you influence your government and ideas for you to mobilise older people into action. [All resources are here.](#)

Aims of ADA

1. To give older people a platform to have their voices heard
2. To make sure older people's voices are heard at the OEWG in July on their rights to: autonomy and independence; long-term care and palliative care; equality and non-discrimination; freedom from violence, abuse and neglect (*see Annex 1 for explanations of these rights*).
3. To call on governments to support a UN convention, by contributing to the OEWG in July 2018.



Give older people a platform

We believe older people must be able to express their experiences of rights. It is critical for older people to have a platform to make their voices heard. Together we can influence government decisions and change attitudes of wider society to see older people as rights holders.

The rights to autonomy and independence; long-term care and palliative care; equality and non-discrimination; freedom from violence, abuse and neglect; will be discussed at the OEWG this year. It is vital that older people's voices are heard in these discussions so that a convention reflects older people's experiences.



Call on governments to contribute to a convention

ADA is a platform to campaign for a new convention. We are calling on governments to contribute to a convention by: listening to the experiences of older people in their country; making a submission to the OEWG consultation by 9th April; and participating in the discussions at the OEWG in July.



The 9th OEWG

The 9th OEWG will take place on 23rd-26th July at UN headquarters in New York.

Participants will discuss four areas of rights. These are the rights to autonomy and independence; long-term care and palliative care; equality and non-discrimination; freedom from violence, abuse and neglect. See Annex 1 for explanations of these rights.

Governments have been asked to [submit information](#) about the situation for older people in their country on these rights by 9th April. HelpAge will be making a submission based on the findings from two consultations with older people.

You can [apply for accreditation](#) to the OEWG. This means your organisation can participate in the OEWG process and you can make sure the voices of older people in your country are heard.

The content of a convention must reflect the experience of older people across the world. We need more governments and

organisations to participate in the OEWG process to make this a reality.

See Annex 2 for why we need a convention.

Planning your campaign

This year we are asking you to mobilise older people on International Women's Day, World Health Day and World Elder Abuse Awareness day to campaign for governments to contribute to the OEWG.

Calls to action

1. For governments to listen to older people's experiences of their rights, and use these experiences to inform their contributions to the OEWG. An effective convention on the rights of older people must reflect the experiences of older people in different countries.
2. For governments to make a submission to the OEWG consultation by 9th April.
3. For governments to attend the OEWG meeting in July.¹

Mobilising older people

Here are some ideas to inspire older people into action!

Involve older people in planning your campaign

Think about how to include older men and women from all backgrounds in planning your campaign tactics. We encourage you to plan your campaign with older men **and** older women, and older people with disabilities. Working with a diverse group of older people will strengthen your campaign.

¹ If governments cannot attend the OEWG, they can send instructions to their diplomatic mission in New York to attend and on what to say in discussions.

Hold a consciousness-raising workshop

[Consciousness-raising](#) is a way to help older people to recognise themselves as rights-holders, by sharing their experiences with other people. This is an effective way to inspire older people to campaign for their rights.

Ask older people about their experiences

Consult with older people on their experiences of autonomy and independence, long-term care, and palliative care. Their responses will help you to build your argument to government that older people's rights must be protected. [You can use the guidance](#) we developed for our *Freedom to Decide for Ourselves* and *Entitled to the Same Rights* reports.



Tools and tactics

Planning your campaign with a diverse group of older people will help you to come up with creative tactics to meet our campaign aims. Here are some suggestions to get you started. [All resources can be found here.](#)

Organise a tripartite meeting

We strongly recommend you organise a tripartite meeting!

It is essential for older people to meet with their government and with their national human rights institutions to talk about the

rights that the OEWG will discuss. It is an important way to bring together those most affected, those with a human rights mandate and expertise, and those in the position to secure a convention.

Meeting with government allows older people to tell their stories and share their experiences. This can be a compelling way to convince decision-makers to act.

[This guidance](#) tells you what you need to do to have a successful tripartite meeting. [You can find country factsheets here](#) detailing your country's position on a convention on the rights of older people.

You can use the key messages in the next section to have a conversation with decision-makers about the rights that the OEWG will discuss.

Share our reports with government

Our [Entitled to the Same Rights](#) report highlights what older women have to say about their experiences of inequality, discrimination, and violence, abuse and neglect. In the report, we give recommendations for what should be in a convention to protect these rights.

Our *Freedom to Decide for Ourselves* report gives older people's views on autonomy, independence, long-term care and palliative care. It gives recommendations for what should be in a convention to protect these rights. **We will send you the full report in March.** [Read key messages from the report here.](#)

Use these reports, and experiences of older people in your country, to convince your government that they need to take action on older people's rights.

Use media to get older people's voices heard

Use social media and traditional media to get older people's voices heard. Get older people blogging about their experiences of their

rights, and, with their consent, use older people's experiences of their rights to plan your social media content. **We will be sending a social media toolkit and national template press release**



before each campaign day.

Campaigns Days

International Women's Day 8th March

The global theme for International Women's Day is [#PressForProgress](#) and calls for faster progress towards gender equality. Together we can make sure older women's voices are included in this conversation. We will send you a social media toolkit before the day.



On International Women's Day, we want to put focus on older women's experiences of **equality and non-**

discrimination, and freedom from violence, abuse and neglect.

Talk with older people about their experiences of these rights. Use our [Entitled to the Same Rights](#) report to convince governments to act, and [ask them to make a submission to the OEWG by 9th April](#).

Key messages for your government

Find more information in *Entitled to the Same Rights* report

Freedom from violence, abuse and neglect

- Many older women report they are subjected to violence, abuse and neglect.
- Violence, abuse and neglect can take place in private such as at home, and in public such as on public transport. It can take place in many different settings, such as care homes, refugee camps, conflict zones.
- Violence, abuse and neglect towards older women is embedded throughout societies. It is accepted as normal. This must change.
- Older women want governments to take steps to prevent violence and to ensure justice for survivors.

"Our society is structurally violent and abuses older people especially women. Many of them feel obliged to take care of the grandchildren or others in their family" (Woman in Zimbabwe)

Equality and non-discrimination

- Older women report they are discriminated against in many areas of their lives, including employment, healthcare, financial services, and access to development programmes
- Older women say discriminatory attitudes and practices are particularly strong towards widowed, single, and disabled older women.

"When it comes to sacking people, they first lay off those women over 55, because their performance is allegedly lower. I know this from personal experience." (Woman in Serbia)

What this means for a convention


- The human rights challenges faced by older women are complex and need dedicated attention within a convention.
- The right to freedom from violence, abuse and neglect should be comprehensive covering all forms of violence, all perpetrators and all settings.
- The right to non-discrimination and equality should cover all forms of discrimination in all areas of life.
- The state should have an obligation to prevent violence, abuse and neglect, as well as provide survivors with support services and access to justice. States should also have a duty to provide information, raise awareness and conduct research.



World Health Day (ADA on Health) 7th April

The global theme for World Health Day has not been announced yet. We will give you more advice on how to link your campaign with the global theme in the social media toolkit.

On World Health Day, we want to amplify older people's experiences of **long-term care and palliative care**.

 Ask older people about their experiences of these rights. Share our [Freedom to Decide for Ourselves](#) report with your government and ask them to take part in the OEWG in July.

Key messages for your government

More information will be available in our Freedom to Decide for Ourselves report, released at the end of March.

Long term-care and support services

Many older people say they have no choice or access to the care and support services they need to live independent lives.

- Long-term care and support services are limited and unaffordable to those without high income.
- Without affordable support services, deterioration in health makes older people feel they are dependent on others. Older people may be at higher risk of isolation without support services.
- Family members are the only support providers available to most older people. This support may not be adequate to meet an older person's needs.
- There is no explicit standard on the right to support for independent living in older age in international human rights law.
- Older people have the right to care and support services and to palliative care without discrimination of any kind.

"There are no support services available to older people in my community. Only family members are taken as or believed to provide assistance with daily activities. But this does not happen for all." (woman in Nepal)

Palliative care

Many older people say they have no access to palliative care to die free from pain and unnecessary suffering.

- Palliative care services are limited or non-existent everywhere.
- The concept of palliative care is completely new to many older people.
- There is no explicit standard on the right to palliative care in international human rights law.

"We didn't even know such services exist in our country or elsewhere." (Older person in Moldova)

What this means for a convention

- Older people have the right to support services for independent living, which are adapted to their individual needs, promote and protect their well-being and maintain their autonomy and independence, without discrimination of any kind.
- Older people have the right to palliative care without discrimination of any kind.



World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (ADA on Rights) 15th June

The global theme for WEAAD has not been announced yet. We will give you more advice on how to link your campaign with the global theme in our social media toolkit.



On WEAAD, we want to put focus on older people's experiences of **autonomy and independence, as well as violence, abuse and neglect.**

Ask older people about their experiences of these rights. Share our [Entitled to the Same Rights](#) and *Freedom to Decide for Ourselves* reports with your government and call on them to take part in the OEWG.

Acts of violence, abuse and neglect can result in the denial of autonomy and independence. In our [Entitled to the Same Rights](#) report, women reported being subjected to different types of violence and abuse that resulted in the denial of their autonomy. For example, women said family members took their income or savings without permission, and were denied the right to use their income and property as they wished.

The denial of autonomy and independence is an act of violence or abuse when it could cause harm or suffering to an older person. For example, ignoring an older person's wishes, such as where to live or whom to live with, may cause suffering. In our [*Freedom to Decide for Ourselves*](#) report, older people in a residential home said they were not allowed to choose their religion, which caused them harm.

Key messages for your government

How autonomy and independence links to violence, abuse and neglect

- Acts of violence and abuse can result in the denial of autonomy and independence.

"They threatened to kill me and even showed me a sword. They forced me to leave the village." (Older woman in Nepal)"

- The denial of autonomy and independence is as an act of violence when it causes harm or distress. Ignoring an older person's wishes about things important to them can cause harm.

"We cannot decide the church because we live in a Catholic charitable home. We are obliged to be Catholic." (Older people in Rwanda)

What older people say about autonomy and independence

More information will be available in our Freedom to Decide for Ourselves report, released at the end of March.

- Older people say independence is being able to make their own decisions, freely and without interference from other people
Many older people report they are not able to make their own decisions in many areas of their lives including finance,

employment, property, who to vote for, where and with whom to live, access to health services, family life and participation in society.

- Different people interfere with older people's autonomy. This includes government and local authorities, local leaders, service providers, and family members.
- Older people feel deterioration in health or income results in their dependency on other people
- There are no explicit standards on autonomy and independence in older age in human rights law.

What this means for a convention

- Older people have the right to freedom of personal autonomy to make decisions, to determine their life plans and to lead autonomous and independent lives in line with their will and preferences and on an equal basis with others.
- Older people have the right to be recognised as rights holders under the law and to take action and make decisions that are legally recognised.

Calendar

Activity/Event	Dates
Plan your activities	NOW!
Campaigns toolkit sent to partners	8 th February
ADA Application deadline	28 th February
Social media toolkit for International Women's Day sent out	1 st March
International women's day	8 th March
<i>Freedom to Decide for Ourselves</i> report released	22 nd March
Social media toolkit sent out	22 nd March
World Health Day (ADA on Health)	7 th April
Progress form sent to partners	23 rd April
Progress form due	11 th May
Social media toolkit sent out	1 st June
World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (ADA on Rights)	15 th June
Open-ended Working Group	23 rd -26 th July
Reporting form sent to partners	2 nd August
Reporting form due	16 th August

i More information

If you need more information on how to campaign, look at our **campaign training manual**. The manual will provide you with all the information you need to run a successful campaign.

If you have any questions or require support please email campaigns@helpage.org

Good luck!

Annex 1: Definitions

Autonomy is the ability to make choices and decisions, including with support if necessary, according to an older person's preferences.

Independence is the ability to perform actions of daily living and participate in society, including with support if necessary, according to an older person's preferences.

Long-term care is services and assistance for older people who need support with daily tasks on a continual basis. Examples of daily tasks include getting around, eating, washing, getting dressed, going out etc.

Support services: Support is the act of providing help or assistance to someone who requires it to carry out daily activities and participate in society (World Report on Ageing, WHO). Types of support services include: mobility support, communications support, support with decision-making, support with daily activities etc.)

Palliative care is a type of care that aims to improve the quality of life of a person going through a life-threatening illness (for example, cancer or AIDS). It aims to relieve pain and help the patient with any psychological, social or spiritual needs. It includes caring for people who are nearing the end of life.

Equality is the full participation and inclusion of older persons in all aspects of society based on equal respect for their dignity

Non-discrimination seeks "to guarantee that human rights are exercised without discrimination of any kind."²

Violence, abuse and neglect is any threat or act, or lack of appropriate action, that could cause physical, sexual, financial or

psychological harm or suffering to an older person. It can be driven by many factors, including age, gender, disability, marital status, or a combination of any of these.

Annex 2: why we need a convention

We need a convention to:

- Establish legal standards that challenge and replace stigmatising and dehumanising ageist attitudes and behaviour
- Clarify how human rights apply in older age
- Ensure states understand their human rights obligations to us in our older age
- Better understand and assert our rights in our older age
- Improve accountability of states for their human rights obligations towards us in older age
- Provide a framework for policy and decision making.

A convention must:

- Provide a comprehensive and systematic framework for the protection and promotion of all our human rights in older age
- Prohibit discrimination on the basis of older age in every aspect of our lives
- Articulate how each human right specifically applies to us in older age
- Provide for a strong implementation, monitoring and accountability system.

² Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No. 20, Non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural rights; 2009.