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GLOBALE SENIORER

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Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jeppe Kofod
Minister for Development Cooperation, Rasmus Prehn

Dear Jeppe Kofod
Dear Rasmus Prehn

Globale Seniorer is pleased to notice that the Danish Government in its strategy to combat the spread and the impact of the Corona pandemic has put special emphasis on protecting the most vulnerable groups in the society. Among those groups are older people due to the fact that their resistance to this virus is weaker.

We have also observed that the government adopted a range of drastic measures immediately after realising the threat for the society as a whole. It seems that this lock-down so far has been a success. The expected number of infected persons in need of hospitalization is much lower than expected as well as the costs/consequences will be. Denmark is now beginning to re-open the society. Globale Seniorer acknowledges that it may lead to an increase in the number of cases of infection. The wish to open for economic activities again is understandable, but it should be done in a way that does not expose older people - or other vulnerable groups - for unnecessary risks. At the same time it is important that people staying in nursing homes are not left in isolation.

Our international responsibility

The Corona-epidemic is not limited to Denmark, it is a pandemic that will reach all countries and thus it will also spread to specifically vulnerable countries and areas. This is the background for our appeal to you.

It is essential that Denmark lives up to our international responsibility. There will be a need for an extraordinary support to the poorest countries. These countries have very weak and insufficient health systems that will not be capable to deal with the Corona epidemic. Older people already face well-documented challenges in accessing health services in both development and humanitarian settings and older people in these countries also suffer from various chronic diseases.

The pandemic is likely to be fatal, not least for many older people who will continue to be left behind unless they are explicitly recognised and identified as a target group for support and inclusion.

The devastating consequences for older people are not only caused by the disease itself, but also by the economic consequences that will lead to increased poverty and hunger.

A specific concern is the threat to refugees in poor countries. They will need significant external support and resources to respond to the disease and a proportion of those resources will have to be directed towards older populations, including older refugees and displaced persons.

On behalf of HelpAge International's global network of 157 organisations, and Globale Seniorer (Danish member of the network) we ask for your support for older people facing Covid-19 in low income and fragile environments.

In this context Globale Seniorer is appealing to the Government to increase the development aid and to use its influence in international fora not the least in the EU to make funding available for the poor countries based on a humanitarian and solidarity perspective.

As the Danish Minister for Finance said when he presented the economic crisis facilities for Danish businesses: "It is an investment".

Increased aid from Denmark and the EU would also be an investment.

Yours sincerely,



Per Bo
President
Globale Seniorer



Justin Derbyshire
Chief Executive Officer,
HelpAge International