

Part II. Description of Actions

Please use the box below to describe the actions your organization has taken in support of the Global Compact. It is strongly recommended that the actions taken are related to one or more of the specific activities suggested. *Please refer to the complete list of suggested activities for your type of organization found here.*

[Write here]

☐ *For civil society organizations: Provide commentary to companies on COP*

Part II. Description of Actions in support of UN Global Compact with Corporates Background

The Situation of Elderly

The situation of the elderly (senior citizens) in India is very precarious with regard to issues of – Health; Hunger and Shelter i.e. referred in the SDGs under Global Compact. Today, the senior citizens constitute 8.6 percent (104 million) of the total population of the total population as per 2011 Census. Considering it is the fastest growing age segment this number will witness a steep rise by 2050. India is home to one out of every 10 senior citizens of the world. The old age dependency ratio is slowly increasing in both rural and urban areas, which is a matter of concern for the State, communities and families. The problem of elderly takes on bewildering proportions with majority of them belonging to marginalized section - 71% living in rural area, majority being women, widow and nearly half belonging to poor Socio - Economic Categories (SEC). As majority belongs to the unorganized sector, they do not have any formal social security mechanism in the form of pension or insurance. Also, with growing migration of young adults, the problem is even more serious in rural areas. Despite constituting a significant segment - 12.5 percent of the Indian electorate their voice and concerns continues to be eluded in policy debates. If seen from the lens of the Gandhi who once said, *“A nation's greatness is measured by how it treats its weakest members”*

Health

Similarly in regard to health facilities required for the majority of elders in every district - as per passed law i.e. MWPS Act'07 - free medicines, beds and geriatric facilities and doctor is yet to be implemented in all districts. The bulk of the elders are yet to be covered under health insurance scheme i.e. *Ayushman Bharat*.

Shelter

Access to old age homes is a right of every indigent elderly (*i.e. an elderly lacking any means*) of the country. Under the *Section 19-Chapter III of MWPS Act'07* it is obligatory for the State to ensure at least 1 Old Age Homes (OAH) with a capacity of 150 in each district, in every state across all states in the country However as on date only 9 out of 30 States/UTs have a minimum of one OAH per district (including OAHs under Integrated Program For Older Persons [IPOP] scheme). Even here most lack the 150 bed capacity as mandated.

Hunger

The role of nutrition towards sustaining lives of the elderly can hardly be over emphasized. Apart from entitlements to grains under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) the elderly have no other State assured access to nutrition. Cooked meals are available for pregnant women and children. The same is not extended to the elderly. Despite its prevalence no independent program have assessed or addressed the issue of nutritional needs of the elderly.

In the context of the above situation of elders HelpAge India has been engaging with corporates in areas related to SDGs related to *Health, Shelter* and *Hunger/Food* i.e. **SDGs Nos 3-(Health)** i.e. Good Health & Well Being, **No.11-(Shelter)** i.e. Sustainable Cities & Communities and **No.2 (Hunger/Food)** i.e. Zero Hunger.

HelpAge India's Action Areas with Corporates in support of UN Global Compact Health

Mobile Healthcare Units: This program seeks to provide sustainable healthcare solutions to elders and their communities. The core of the program is a sponsored Mobile Healthcare Unit (MHU). This Unit provides primary healthcare to the needy elderly, while simultaneously educates the community on preventive healthcare. Each MHU has a doctor, pharmacist and a social worker. Our **mobile healthcare** network today has expanded considerably, crisscrossing the country, to provide basic medical care to destitute elders and their community. Overall there are more than 161 Mobile Healthcare Units (MHUs) working in 23 states, providing 2.77 million free treatments. **Out of the total numbers of MHUs mentioned 155 MHU in 2018-19 and 144 MHUs in 2019-2020 were corporate supported. In 2018, the corporate support was to the tune of Rs. 23.14 crores. In 2019 – 69 corporates supported to the tune of Rs. 22.78 crores.**

Restoration of Vision: In India 62% elderly suffer from cataract blindness. Credible and competent eye hospitals are selected for carrying out surgeries with HelpAge India's support. Many corporates provide support for these free surgeries for poor, disadvantaged elders. All surgeries are performed only in base hospitals and not in make-shift camps. Since 1980, this program has benefitted more than 9 lakh elders, restoring their sight & dignity. In 2018 a total of 75 and in 2019, 61 corporates supported free cataract surgeries for poor disadvantaged elders. In 2018 the total financial support received from corporates was to the tune of Rs. 62.62 lacs and in 2019 it was over Rs. 54.59 lacs.

Geriatric Physiotherapy: Under this program, elders with musculoskeletal diseases such as back pain, arthritis, paralysis and other age related mobility challenges are treated. The aim is to enable the elder mobility levels and make daily living easier. The services are provided through stationary physiotherapy clinics, mobile services to remote communities and elder residents of homes for the aged. Corporates in 2018 supported 10 geriatric physiotherapy units in 8 states and similarly in 2019. In 2018 the total corporate support for physiotherapy was of over Rs. 17.28 lacs and Rs. 7.09 lacs in 2019.

Elder Helplines - 1800 - 180 - 1253: HelpAge runs overall toll-free Elder Helplines across 22 states in India offering assistance to older persons in need of emergency care and protection. The services offered are - rescue of abandoned elders, counselling those in distress, legal support, information related to services available etc. HelpAge has also launched the 'HelpAge SOS' App to ensure help is just a click away. Helpline in Chennai (TN) received support from 1 (one) corporate in 2018 & 2019 to the tune of Rs. 16.17 lacs.

Disaster Interventions - It was also one of our toughest years with the onset of two major disasters, the entire state of Kerala being devastated by floods due to torrential rains over a period of two months, followed by Cyclone Gaja, a '*very severe cyclonic storm*' affecting districts in coastal Tamil Nadu. Apart from Kerala and Tamil Nadu, HelpAge India had intervened in Odisha, Bihar, Assam, Uttarakhand and other states. The challenge that lay ahead of our relief teams was immense as they had to venture into remote areas while communication was totally cut off, and accessibility limited. HelpAge India's foot soldiers who worked day and night, reaching out and providing relief and medicines to those who needed it most. Corporate support also came for many of the relief and rehabilitation measures implemented. In 2018, total of 8 corporates gave support to HelpAge India's disaster interventions in Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu to the tune of over Rs. 12 lacs. In 2019 similarly 15 corporates supported disaster & emergency interventions in Odisha and Bihar to the tune of over Rs.19 lacs.

Hunger

Support a Gran: There are thousands of destitute elders who need basic support. Over the years HelpAge India has enabled more than 30,000 destitute elderly sustain themselves with regular supplies of food rations, clothing and basic healthcare. Today, the program supports needy elders supporting their day-to-day sustenance, so they can live a life of dignity. In the years of 2018 & 2019 1 (one) corporate supported HelpAge India's *Support-a-Gran* project intervention in Pilani, Rajasthan to the total tune of over 5 lacs over the two years.

Livelihood Support: Elders struggling to survive, especially in rural India, live lonely and impoverished lives. HelpAge organizes them into viable and sustainable Elder-Self-Help-Groups (ESHGs). The elders in these groups choose a viable livelihood activity that can generate income and pool their resources to support each other. These ESHGs are then federated into higher level community institutions so that they gain additional robustness. This model of HelpAge India has been adopted by the Ministry of Rural Development. Our livelihood program has been now scaled up with extension of work to government's 'aspirational districts'. **In 2018 1 (one) corporate supported HelpAge India's Livelihood interventions to the tune of over Rs. 26.89 lacs. Similarly, in 2019 also 1 (one) corporate supported the same to the tune of over Rs. 11.88 lacs.**

Shelter

Old Age Homes/Day Care Centres: A roof over their heads is the critical need of the destitute elder, sick and often abandoned by family. HelpAge India has established model homes for the aged in places such as Patiala & Gurdaspur in Punjab, Cuddalore in Tamil Nadu and Kolkata in West Bengal. Besides these, HelpAge has also supported over 60 old age homes across India. In 2018, 6 Old Age Homes (OAHs) in Tamil Nadu were supported to the tune of over Rs. 24.75 lacs by 1 (one) corporate. Similarly it was continued in 2019 for 9 Old Age Homes (OAHs) in Tamil Nadu to the tune of over Rs. 26.45 lacs for various items for elders living in old age homes. Also, in 2019 1 (one) corporate supported 32 elders in TEV Cuddalore Old Age Home (OAH). Similarly, in 2019, another 1 (one) corporate supported 25 elders in OAH Patiala. Additionally in year 2018 & 2019, 18 Free Old Age Homes where rescued elders were placed for rehabilitation received corporate support for various items to the tune of 45 lacs.

Actions in Sensitization of Corporates

Leave No One Behind - National CSR Conference: As part of HelpAge's 40 year milestone, a National Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Conference was held in Delhi, on the theme of sustainable development goals, titled – 'Leave no one behind'. The Conclave brought together key members of the corporate industry, government and civil society, with Chief Guest, Dr. Amarjeet Sinha, Secretary - Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India. The aim was to examine the possibilities of leveraging CSR initiatives to enhance inclusion of marginalized communities in the process of economic & social development. The discussions centered on the need for CSR to address larger societal issues, to go beyond merely meeting statutory guidelines. CSR should aim to fulfil the Social Development Goals via inclusion of those often left behind. In particular, older people, especially older women are among the most disadvantaged sections of Indian society. Social protection, basic services and infrastructure should be made accessible to all.

Actions COVID-19 times

The worst hit by the Covid 19 pandemic have been the elderly, both in rural & urban India, identified as the most vulnerable section of society, they were hit the hardest. HelpAge India has been working on-ground both pre & post the lockdown, focusing on the poor, destitute and disadvantaged elders, who are struggling to simply survive. As per a survey done by HelpAge India, 65% elders stated that the COVID 19 lockdown impacted their livelihood of which 60% were from rural India. 71% elders said that the livelihood of the breadwinner of their family was heavily impacted. With no money to survive on, most poor elders living in urban slums & villages, barely had food to eat and therefore could not afford to sustain even their basic medication, resulting in a worsening of their health condition, especially those suffering from chronic diseases. During disasters, mostly the younger able bodied manage to access relief packages, our elders are silently left behind as they are too fragile to run and access the relief vehicles in time. Therefore, HelpAge ensures that during relief distributions, while the homeless, migrant workers and poor, receive the much needed relief, our focus remains on the elderly. When an elder receives ration or relief material, they automatically share it with the younger members of their family, children & grandchildren equally.

In the first phase of work before the lockdown started, HelpAge focused on generating awareness about the Safety measures against Covid 19, both in urban & rural areas, through its Mobile Healthcare Units & Helpline service (1800-180-1253).

HelpAge has a strong Mobile Healthcare Unit (MHU) nationwide network and healthcare teams reached out to needy elders in rural India & urban slums, driving deep into the interiors, to ensure that relief reaches the unreached elders & their communities.

The lockdown brought many challenges, but the HelpAge Corona Warriors worked relentlessly to help those in need & disadvantaged elders, homeless, migrant workers & poor living urban slums & villages, providing them various kinds of supports in areas Health, Hunger & Shelter.

Corporate Support in COVID-19 times

1. 57 corporates supported in HelpAge India's above COVID-19 interventions to the tune of over Rs. 49.64 lacs by way of support for Basic Essentials & Survival Kits & Up gradation of Old Age Homes which benefited 3,305 poor and needy elders.
2. 50 corporates gave support to the tune of Rs. 43.31 lacs for COVID related supportive interventions during period April'20 to Nov'20
