

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. Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 - free medicines, beds and geriatric facilities and doctor is yet to be implemented in all districts. The majority 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 MWPSAct'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. Details are given below:

Goal no. 1: No Poverty - End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Its objectives include ensuring that the entire population and especially the poorest and most vulnerable have equal rights to economic resources, access to basic services, property and land control, natural resources and new technologies. HelpAge India understands and works on this in the context of older persons.

Goal no. 2: Zero Hunger - End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Older persons who are more vulnerable to poverty and hunger more so in low- and middle-income countries and in backward areas and communities. HI makes efforts to ensure food security to such people through its direct intervention programmes. Besides, nutrition in old age is also part of its health initiatives.

Goal no. 3: Good Health and Well-being - Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

In the context of older persons, communicable, non-communicable and environmental diseases; universal health coverage; and access for all to safe, effective, quality and affordable medicines and vaccines drives HI's health programme.

Goal no. 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Older persons are excluded from modern city life by not being conversant with use of digital devices and applications. HI makes efforts to make older persons digitally literate and learn about digital safety as well so that they use it with ease and confidence.

Goal no. 13: Climate Action - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

It emphasizes the need for awareness, education, and capacity building to address climate issues and advocates for enhanced international cooperation to tackle this shared concern. In the context of older persons, HI makes efforts for disaster risk reduction and relief and rehabilitation of affected older persons and their families.

Goal no. 17: Partnerships for Goals - Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

In true spirit of this SGD, HI makes efforts to forge partnerships governments, the private sector, and other civil society organisations to address complex challenges that older persons face in life.

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

Health in old age means more than curative aspects. As stated in the SDGs and decade of healthy ageing, WHO Decade of Healthy Ageing, includes promotive and preventive health as well. The Mobile Healthcare Units are a vehicle to provide all three at the community level. The primary task of MHU is to provide curative health but other elements are woven into it through camps and periodic activities. The overall capacity of the staff and volunteers built through short courses design for preventive and promotive healthcare.

Geriatric Physiotherapy and restoration of vision to the older persons goes a long way in enabling them to be independent at home, in community and at work place.

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 170 Mobile Healthcare Units (MHUs) working in 26 states, providing 2.77 million free treatments. The total numbers of MHUs in FY 2022-23 is 164 supported by 115 corporates to the tune of Rs. 56.22 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. More than 20,000 eye surgeries conducted in the FY 2022-23 and supported by more than 20 corporates to the tune of Rs. 2.54 crores

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. In 2022-23, five Corporates supported with Rs. 37 lacs which benefitted 7000 older persons.

Disaster Interventions

Climate change is impacting India in a big way and natural disasters have become frequent. HelpAge India provides assistance to the communities in vulnerable areas through disaster risk reduction and relief and rehabilitation to the affected families particularly older persons.

In 2022-23, eight corporates gave support to HelpAge India's disaster interventions in Assam, Odisha, Kerala and Bihar to the tune of over Rs. 1.35 crores.

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. One corporate supported HelpAge India's *Support-a-Gran* project to the total tune of over 24 lacs in FY 2022-23.

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 2022-23, two corporates supported HelpAge India's Livelihood interventions to the tune of over Rs. 5.62 crores. This programme benefitted over 1,00,000 rural older persons.

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 8 model homes for the aged in places such as Patiala & Gurdaspur in Punjab, Cuddalore and Neyveli in Tamil Nadu and 2 in Kolkata in West Bengal 1 in Patna, Bihar and 1 recently opened in Leh, Ladakh. In addition to this we are running a 24x7 Shelter project in collaboration with DMRC in Delhi.

Besides these, HelpAge is currently in close partnership with over nearly 450 old age homes across India. In FY 22-23, 8 Old Age Homes (OAHs) were supported, 16 Day Care Centre and shelter / short stay. In the FY 22-23 two corporates supported destitute older persons living in HelpAge India old age homes with a support of Rs. 50 lacs. (Data from CRMOD) Apart from this, we are also supporting Assistive Devices to old age home residents all over India.
