

*t*ransforming lives...

1.25 million disadvantaged elderly served but more await



Today, **there are an estimated 100 million elders**. Of them, **90 million still need to work** to survive, yet **55 million sleep hungry**. HelpAge India runs a gamut of programs that impact the lives of many such needy elders. Yet this is but a drop in the ocean and millions more are still waiting for relief. Every rupee received in donation, every project sanctioned, goes a long way in reaching out to the needy elderly.

Support the old today. They cannot wait for tomorrow.

**Given below are glimpses of major HelpAge initiatives:
PROGRAMS**

Mobile Health Services: This program seeks to provide sustainable healthcare solutions to whole communities. The core of the program is a sponsored Mobile Health Unit (MHU). This Unit provides primary healthcare to the elderly, while simultaneously using the same resources to educate and inform the community on preventive healthcare, hygiene and connect the community to government schemes of health insurance and pension. Subsequently, the plan is to make it a community-led and managed health services program, which will remain in place after the sponsored MHUs do not operate after 3 years. Currently, there are 110 MHUs covering 104 districts in 23 states providing 1.7 million free treatments per annum.



Cataract Surgeries: In India 62% elderly suffer from cataract blindness. Credible and competent eye hospitals and organisations working for eye care are selected for carrying out surgeries with HelpAge India's support. All surgeries under the program are performed only in base hospitals and not in substitute make-shift camps. Since 1980, this program has benefitted more than 9 lac elders, not just restoring their sight, but enabling them to go back to work and live a life of dignity.



Cancer and Palliative Care: Cancer treatment in our country is highly priced and majority of elders are not covered by any form of medical insurance. HelpAge India provides palliative care to end-stage cancer patients, in partnership with a number of credible and competent cancer hospitals and organisations. Over 99,000 treatments have been supported since 1998.

Geriatric Physiotherapy: Under this program, elderly persons with musculoskeletal diseases such as back pain, arthritis and even paralysis and other age related mobility-challenges are treated. The aim of this program is to enable the elderly to support and maintain their fitness and mobility level and make daily-living easier, restoring their self-confidence and self-esteem. The services are provided through stationary physiotherapy clinics, mobile services to remote communities, to residents of homes for the aged and home visits are made by a qualified physiotherapist. Currently, Physiotherapy Clinics are operational in 70 locations across the country in 23 states.



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, basic healthcare and sometimes provided livelihood opportunities.

Disaster Relief and Rehabilitation: Every disaster impacts the elderly more than others as they have difficulty accessing relief. HelpAge India has stepped in at every major disaster, delivering specialized relief and rehabilitation measures such as during the floods in Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Kashmir, Bihar, and earthquakes in Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir etc.

Old Age Homes/Day Care Centres: A roof over their heads is the critical need of the elder destitute, sick and abandoned by family, and those uprooted by disasters. HelpAge India has established model homes for the elderly 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.

Livelihood Opportunities: To enhance elder capacities, HelpAge mobilizes them through the formation of Elder-Self-Help-Groups (ESHGs) that are centered on sustainable methods of income generation. 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 and HelpAge has been designated as the National Resource Organization for elderly by the National Rural Livelihoods Mission. Currently, this program covers more than 60,000 elderly across India.



Elder Helplines 1800-180-1253: HelpAge toll-free Elder Helplines across 21 states of India offer 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. The helpline works as the co-ordination unit linking elders to various institutions such as old age homes, hospitals, geriatric specialists, police, government and non-governmental organizations.

Tamaraikulam Elders Village (TEV):

TEV is a unique rehabilitation project situated on the Cuddalore-Puducherry road, Tamil Nadu, built by HelpAge India-NDTV viewers, after the Tsunami in 2004. 100 elder victims of the



Tsunami devastation found in TEV a safe place to live, in the form of a modern village for elders, which provides healthcare, professional care, livelihood options and recreational facilities.

ADVOCACY

HelpAge India reaches 1.25 million elderly through its various interventions. However, that's just one percent of the 100 million elderly in India today. To be able to work for the other 99%, HelpAge India needs far greater resources and the consistent support of the society and government in the States and Centre. Raising public awareness and interacting with media, legislators, and government to espouse the elder cause is therefore, an essential and continuous activity for HelpAge India.



Working with Society:

Building public awareness on the importance of supporting the elder cause and its related issues, is a key objective of HelpAge India. Every year, it invites **public participation** in Walkathons, Signature campaigns, Street Theatre etc. on 'International Day of Older Persons' (IDOP) on 1st October and also **involves and engages with the media** in highlighting the evil of Elder Abuse on 'World Elder Abuse Awareness Day' on 15th June. Regular interaction and meetings are held with Senior Citizens Associations in



cities and Elder Groups in the rural areas. Common cause is found with partners working on other rights-based issues such as: Pension Parishad, National Association of Street Vendors of India etc.

Working with the Youth: HelpAge India's **Student Action for Value Education (SAVE)** aims to inculcate care and respect for the elderly through HelpAge India's long standing program with schools across the country. On the other hand, the **Help Unite Generations (HUG)** initiative aims at involving college students and young professionals to engage with elders and regularly keep in touch with them and provide them companionship.

Working with Governments: Sensitizing legislators in governments both in the **States** and **Centre**, has resulted in HelpAge India contributing significantly to the formulation of the National Policy on Older Persons and the enactment of the Maintenance & Welfare of the Parents and Senior Citizens Act (2007). Current ongoing advocacy efforts aim at – Increase in Old Age Pension, Inclusion in Health Insurance and Food Security for Elders.

Working with Elders: HelpAge India taps the potential of senior citizens in evolving solutions to address their needs. It is currently associated with more than 1,145 **Senior Citizens' Associations** (SCAs) with 14.75 lac members across 20 states. Additionally, seniors are offered counselling for financial assistance schemes like the Reverse Mortgage Scheme and help with Wills & Legacies. SCAs are mentored to engage actively with charitable work. Currently, 70 Geriatric Physiotherapy Clinics in 23 states are being managed by SCAs after an initial period of hand-holding by HelpAge.



Digital Literacy for Elders:

The fast pace of change in technology makes it difficult for most to keep up. More so with elders who find it almost impossible to keep up with the latest gadgets, mobile applications, new smart

phones, tablets etc. This handicap excludes elders from the main stream social fabric. To tackle this, HelpAge has started an easy 'Digital Literacy' program introducing elders to the online world. Partner institutions, organizations, volunteers and interns are encouraged to conduct basic tutorials for elders, using the **HelpAge Handbook for Senior Citizens:** 'Computers and Smart Phones - learning made easy'.

AdvantAge Card program: This benefit card offers discounts from Retail Associates on various products, services, and facilities ranging from health and wellness to holiday homes. It helps the card holder to stretch household budgets, especially of those senior citizens living on limited or fixed incomes. Currently, there are 1.66 lac members from over 400 towns in 22 states being offered discounts by more than 6000 Associates across India.

The Government of India has recognized HelpAge India's work by according donations made to it eligible for tax exemption.



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