

# Ageing in South Asia

Putting Older People First  
Issue 2 / December 2016



Waqas A Qureshi/HelpAge International

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**HelpAge**

global network

## Older People Receive Training That Help Reduce Generation Gap

Older People's Associations based in Kaski and Chitwan districts of Nepal were provided Inter-Generation Skill Transfer Training with support from HelpAge International. The training's main objectives were to build greater intergenerational cohesion and increase youth participation in older people led livelihood activities- which HelpAge has been implementing in the districts through Strengthening Active Ageing in Nepal (SAAN) project. Two trainings in each district were conducted in coordination with Nepal Participatory Action Network (NEPAN) and Women for Human Rights (WHR). Altogether 270 older people from the two districts received training, with majority (137) of female participants.

For details, please get in touch with our Livelihood Officer in Nepal (Pramila Dhakal: [pramila.dhakal@helpagesa.org](mailto:pramila.dhakal@helpagesa.org)).

## From the field

### Empowering Older Women to Support Themselves

Noori Khatoon is a house wife who lives in a village of province Sindh in Pakistan. She has 4 sons and 2 daughters. Their earnings are very limited that sometime even their basic necessities are not met.

Khatoon was identified needy to receive Poultry and Kitchen Gardening Training for livelihood support by Older People's Association based in her locality. After the training she received 11 hens and a rooster, built a small Chicken coop at her home and started raising them as instructed by the trainers.

Now, Khatoon is able to feed her children healthy chicken eggs. She sells the remaining eggs in the evening so she can support her family.

Khatoon has also started Kitchen Gardening with the seeds she received after the training. She grows vegetables like Ladyfinger, Bitter Gourd, Green Pepper, Spinach and Apple Gourd, and sells most of them to support her family.

Khatoon, who is very proud by her own progression in life, never thought she would be earing her own living one day and doesn't have to ask for money from her husband.

## Older People Advocating for Improved Access to Livelihoods

Older People's Associations (OPAs) in Sindh, Pakistan are advocating for their inclusion in Microfinance and Social Protection Policy and Programmes. HelpAge International is working to develop their capacities through Community Based Advocacy Trainings. Detailed orientation on existing provisions of banking and microfinance, and procedures older people need to fulfill in order to access them were provided to the OPA members. IEC materials were also provided to assist their advocacy efforts. OPAs, with their well-developed advocacy plans in place, already approached several concerned government officials and put forth their demands. Recently, one effect has been the State Bank of Pakistan issued a directive to all banks including microfinances to facilitate and provide all sorts of banking facilities to older people without any discrimination.

For details, please get in touch with our Advocacy and Communications Coordinator in Pakistan (Waqas A Qureshi: [waqas.qureshi@helpagesa.org](mailto:waqas.qureshi@helpagesa.org)).

*"I love to do kitchen gardening and raising chickens"*



Khatoon was supported by "Empowering Older People to Improve lives" project funded by Big Lottery Fund via Age International.

For details, please get in touch with our Advocacy and Communications Coordinator in Pakistan (Waqas A Qureshi: [waqas.qureshi@helpagesa.org](mailto:waqas.qureshi@helpagesa.org)).

## Sensitising Humanitarian Actors for Older People Inclusive Response Plans

HelpAge International organised Helping Older People in Emergencies (HOPE) trainings in Dhaka, Lalmonirhat, Kurigram and Gaibandha districts of Bangladesh involving 146 humanitarian actors from government and non-government organisations. The training in general aimed at enhancing humanitarian actors' capacity to integrate older people in their humanitarian plans/ programmes, whilst upon completion the participants were able to identify needs and capacities of older people in emergencies, modify and develop older people-sensitive humanitarian programmes, support their own organisations to be older people-

inclusive, and also be committed to develop at least two older people-inclusive practical actions in their organisational response plans.

The trainings were organised as a part of the Inclusion of Older People in Disaster Resilience (IDR) project, funded by Margaret A Cargill Philanthropies. HelpAge's local partners- Bohubrihy, Gono Unnoyon Kendro (GUK) and Samata Nari Kallyan Sangstha (SNKS) played a great role in making the training programme a success.

For details, please get in touch with our Project Officer in Bangladesh (Md. Balayat Hossain: [balayat.hossain@helpagesa.org](mailto:balayat.hossain@helpagesa.org))

## 1K Community Volunteers Receive Training on Age-Inclusive Disaster Response

HelpAge International in coordination with Bangladesh Institute for Theatre Arts (BITA) organised a number of trainings on Age-Inclusive Disaster Response for Community Disaster Management Committee (CDMC) Volunteers. A total of 1,000 community volunteers participated in the trainings organised at Lalmonirhat, Kurigram and Laxmipur districts. The major aim of the training was to enhance capacity of CDMCs based in these 3 districts, to respond immediately to any small scale disasters in coming days, while keeping older people at its core. Insightful sessions on Early Warning Systems, First Aid, Search and Rescue, Fire Safety and Stockpiling were provided to the volunteers. A specialist from the Local Fire Service and Civil Defense Station facilitated the trainings. Practical sessions were also conducted as part of the training programme. Similarly, a package containing a Megaphone, First Aid Box, Stretcher and Life Jacket were distributed each to 50 CDMCs.

## Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment Training Conducted

A three day Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment Training was conducted in Bhaktapur, Nepal for 30 participants (16F + 14M). The training, which aimed to understand local communities' vulnerabilities and capacities in terms of disaster through familiarisation with the VCA concept, tools and methodology, is a key intervention under HelpAge's 2015 Nepal Earthquake Response Project.

Moreover, First-Aid Trainings were provided to the older people-inclusive Local Disaster Management Committees of Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, Sindupalchowk, Nuwakot, and Gorkha districts, with at least one-quarter of all training participants being active, existing members of HelpAge's OPAs. The trainings were delivered to build greater knowledge on basics of First Aid and to strengthen 'First-Responder' responsibilities during natural disasters.

Participants performing a Community Mapping exercise during the Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment Training in Bhaktapur, Nepal.



For details, please get in touch with our DRR Officer in Nepal (Dinesh Thapa: [dinesh.thapa@helpagesa.org](mailto:dinesh.thapa@helpagesa.org)).

## Stakeholders Show Commitment to Ensure Older People's Representation in LDMCs

The Chief District Office, National Human Rights Commission, District Women and Children Development Office along with various other concerned district-level stakeholders of Kailali district, Nepal, signed a Commitment Note on 11 September 2016 to ensure older people are included and their contributions are acknowledged while forming Local Disaster Management Committees in the district. This was a result of a series of district-level meetings led by the four Older People's Associations (OPAs) of Kailali under Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies funded project- Inclusion of Older People in Disaster Resilience (IDR).

For details, please get in touch with our Project Officer in Nepal (Sitaram Dahal: [sitaram.dahal@helpagesa.org](mailto:sitaram.dahal@helpagesa.org)).

## Government of Pakistan Recognises HelpAge as Technical Partner

HelpAge International signed a Memorandum of Understanding with FATA Disaster Management Authority (FDMA), Government of Pakistan. As per the MoU, HelpAge will provide technical support on inclusion of Older People and Person with Disabilities in the ongoing/future programmes of the FDMA. HelpAge will also build capacity of FDMA personnel through different trainings and IEC materials.

The MoU, which adheres to National Disaster Management Authority Guidelines, is a draft agreement framework between HelpAge and FDMA promoting collaboration towards inclusion of Ageing and Disability issues in the humanitarian work of the FDMA. For details, please get in touch with our Advocacy and Communications Coordinator in Pakistan (Waqas A Qureshi: [waqas.queeshi@helpagesa.org](mailto:waqas.queeshi@helpagesa.org)).

## Inclusive CBDRM Trainings and Mock Drills for Flood Prone Communities



Older people during CBDRM Training at Muzaffargarh in Province Punjab.

Muzaffargarh in Province Punjab, Pakistan is a flood prone district as it lies in between major rivers- the Chenab and Indus. There are many canals that cut across Muzaffargarh, providing water from nearby farms, which makes the land very fertile and equally vulnerable to flooding in the monsoon season. HelpAge International is working in close coordination with Community Support Groups in the district to raise awareness amongst communities regarding Inclusive Community Based Disaster Risk Management.

Trainings were organised recently in the district focusing on the Inclusion of Older People and Persons with Disabilities in Disaster Risk Management, involving key district stakeholders like Rescue 1122. A concept of stockpiling basic necessities were also introduced. As a follow up Mock Drills were organised where communities as well as government rescue and relief departments actively participated.

For details, please get in touch with our Advocacy and Communications Coordinator in Pakistan (Waqas A Qureshi: [waqas.queeshi@helpagesa.org](mailto:waqas.queeshi@helpagesa.org)).

## World Alzheimer's Day Marked in Nepal



Mahesh Dhungel/HelpAge International

Representatives of Nepal Government, NASCIF and ARDS displaying Memory Walk banner on World Alzheimer's Day at Basantapur, Kathmandu.

On the occasion of World Alzheimer's Day- 21 September 2016, HelpAge International and Alzheimer's and Related Dementia Society (ARDS) Nepal organised a series of events in and outside Kathmandu to spread awareness about Alzheimer's disease. A major event was held in Kathmandu in the presence of stakeholders from various government and non-government agencies- with the slogan 'Remember Me'- followed by special Alzheimer's orientations

at the National Health Education Information and Communication Centre (NHEICC), Kathmandu and Nepalgunj Medical College (NMC), Banke. The orientation ended on a constructive note: the college will, from 30 September 2016 onwards, run a memory clinic for older patients on a weekly basis.

For details, please get in touch with our Sr. Fundraising, Advocacy and Communications Coordinator (Pradesh K Rai: [pradesh.raihelpagesa.org](mailto:pradesh.raihelpagesa.org)).

## NCD Alliance of Pakistan Revitalised

The Non Communicable Diseases Alliance of Pakistan that was in a slow-moving state for a long time has now been revitalised as a result of the joint efforts of HelpAge International, government departments and civil society organisations. Recently, HelpAge organised a National Dialogue on the Challenges of NCDs in Pakistan together with the NCDA, where prominent stakeholders from government and civil society including WHO, the Ministry of Health and the Health Services Academy participated. Referring to the fact that NCDs are the leading cause of death globally, participants agreed that their risk factors are further accelerated in older age. While tobacco use, physical inactivity and unhealthy diets are the major causative factors, participants stressed the need to improve awareness about proper diet, healthy life style and management of NCDs among older people.

For details, please get in touch with our Advocacy and Communications Coordinator in Pakistan (Waqas A Qureshi: [waqas.qureshihelpagesa.org](mailto:waqas.qureshihelpagesa.org)).

## Nepal Earthquake Recovery Project: A Glance at the Health Component

- Psychosocial Counselling orientations delivered to Frontline Community Health Workers of Kathmandu, Nuwakot, Bhaktapur and Sindupalchwok districts.
- Medical equipment distributed to the Local Health Offices and OPAs in all NERP working districts. Equipment includes- Snellen Chart (Vision Test), Glucometer, Weighing Machine, Sphygmomanometer (BP Test), Stethoscope, Digital Thermometer, ENT Set and Ophthalmoscope.
- Eye-glasses supplied to the Ophthalmic Clinics that are in operation at various corners of Sindupalchwok district through Tilganga Eye Hospital. OPAs report greater access to the clinics.
- Orientation on Diabetes, Hypertension, Cataract, Nutrition and Personal Hygiene provided to the Community Health Volunteers and OPAs of Bhaktapur, Sindupalchwok, Kavre and Nuwakot districts, through regular health classes HelpAge has been running since the early phase of the response.

For details, please get in touch with our Health Officer in Nepal (Deepak Malla: [deepak.mallahelpagesa.org](mailto:deepak.mallahelpagesa.org)).

## Campaign to Overcome Ageism

On and around 1 October 2016, Age Demands Action (ADA) campaigners in South Asia (Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka) took a stand to highlight what Ageism is and how it has inhibited older people from enjoying their life to the fullest.

A range of campaign activities were organised across South Asia as part of the Campaign to Overcome Ageism. Video testimony of older people who have experienced different forms of abuse were collected beforehand and released through HelpAge’s headquarters in London on International Day of Older Persons for wider sensitisation. Similarly workshops, dramas/plays, mass rallies/walk, cultural performances and students’ drawing competition were organised, mobilising both local and national level media. Additionally, campaigners met their government seeking commitment on their participation or sending an official statement, supporting the need for the adoption of an International Convention on the Rights of Older People, at the 17th UN OEWSGA meeting, taking place from 12 – 15 December at the UN Headquarters in New York.

The OEWSGA was established by the UN General Assembly in 2010, whose purpose is to strengthen the protection of the rights of older people by reviewing how existing instruments address older people’s rights, identify gaps in protection, and explore the feasibility of new human rights instruments. Because older people at the moment are not protected by any international legal instruments, campaigners in South Asia and around the world are advocating for an International Convention on the Rights of Older People.



An old man displaying campaign placard during the rally organised by NASCIF on 1 October in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Ashish Mahar/HelpAge International

## Cultural Festival



Participants displaying ADA banners during awareness event at the Cultural Festival in Dinajpur, Bangladesh.



Cultural actors performing at the Cultural Festival in Dinajpur, Bangladesh.

Bohubrihy

A three day long Cultural Festival was organised from 20-22 September in Naogaon district, Bangladesh in support of the Campaign to Overcome Ageism. A similar festival was organised from 23-25 September in another district- Dinajpur. HelpAge’s partners BSDO and Bohubrihy organised the festivals in coordination with District Older People’s Association and the District Administration Office. The festival was driven by the central theme ‘Take a Stand Against Ageism’ and comprised activities like Rallies, Discussion Programmes, Students’ Painting, Debate and Quiz Competitions, and Cultural Competitions. Prominent personalities such National Celebrities, District Commissioner and Parliament Member attended the festival.

## Consciousness-Raising Workshop

HelpAge International in coordination with its partners in Pakistan organised 6 Consciousness-Raising Workshops involving around 1,000 older people from different parts of the country. The workshops were reportedly very effective as they allowed older people to internalise the root causes of the problems/challenges they have been facing as a result of ageism. Country context IEC materials were prepared and used in the workshops. Similar workshops were organised in Rajasthan, India by our partner GRAVIS.



Pictures of Consciousness-Raising Workshops organised by GRAVIS in Rajasthan, India.

## Mass Rally

A mass rally was organised in Kathmandu city on 1 October 2016 to support the Campaign to Overcome Ageism and mark the 26th IDOP by the National Senior Citizens' Federation (NASCIF). OPAs from several districts including HelpAge's partner organisations- NEPAN, WHR and Ageing Nepal participated in the march. A musical band and Nepal Scout students were also invited to join the walk so as to grab larger public attention.



Ashish Magar/HelpAge International

Civil society representatives and older people during the rally in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Similarly in Pakistan, a mass rally was organised by HelpAge to support the campaign and its ongoing advocacy efforts to introduce new laws/policies for the protection of the rights of older people in Pakistan. HelpAge Sri Lanka and GRAVIS in India also took initiatives to organise rallies at their respective countries in support of the campaign.



GRAVIS

A group picture during mass rally organised by GRAVIS in Phalodi, Jasasthan on 1 October 2016.

## Drawing Competition

A drawing competition among 7th grade students of NK Singh Memorial English Preparatory School, Kathmandu, Nepal was organised by Ageing Nepal to support the Campaign to Overcome Ageism and mark IDOP on 29th Sep 2016. The students were also oriented about the campaign, IDOP, and its relevancy.



A group photo after the Drawing Competition at NK Singh Memorial English Preparatory School in Kathmandu.

Ageing Nepal

[Join our global campaign!](#)  
[Learn about Global Campaign to Overcome Ageism!](#)

**“When a person reaches 60 years,  
he can only tell tales and fables.”**

*Whenever someone narrates this proverb in front of me  
I feel very sad. I feel sorry!*

*The proverb should be changed as-*

**“when a person reaches the age 60, he  
becomes eligible to give advices and  
wise suggestions.”**



Waqas A. Qureshi/HelpAge International

Mr. Shakir Hussain - 58, Nowhsera, KPK, Pakistan.

## South Asia Senior Citizens' Forum Formed



Regional delegates including HelpAge officials posing for a group photograph as the regional workshop concludes, in Kathmandu, Nepal.

A regional body, South Asia Senior Citizens' Forum (SASCF) was established on 12 July 2016 at the concluding session of a two-day regional workshop on the issues of Senior Citizens in South Asia held in Kathmandu, Nepal. The SASCF will be led by Dr. Gauri Shankar Las Das (Chairman, NASCIF- Nepal)

and Chhatra Bahadur Pradhan (Secretary General, NASCIF- Nepal) with Ferdous Ara Begum (HelpAge International Board Member- Bangladesh), Mohammad Edrees Omarzad (Afghanistan), Sonam Tshewang (Bhutan), Digamber Chapke (India), Prof. Dr. Sujan Bhatia (India), Shyam Sunder Dhaubhadel (Nepal) and Dr. Neela Gunasekera (Sri Lanka) as Contributing Members.

The Group, which aims to work "as a unifying organisation to support, promote and expand rights as manifest in policies, laws and programmes for older people in the South Asia region," then held its first working meeting on 13 July 2016 and shared its declaration-statement with the SAARC governments. HelpAge International- Nepal was the main technical support partner for the two-day regional workshop.

For details, please get in touch with our Sr. Fundraising, Advocacy and Communications Coordinator (Pradesh K Rai: [pradesh.raihelpagesa.org](mailto:pradesh.raihelpagesa.org)).

## Inter-Actors Exchange Visit to Improve Cultural Campaigning



Cultural Campaigners posing for a group photo during the exchange visit in Chittagong, Bangladesh.

To exchange best practices and ideas regarding Cultural Campaigning and Social Awareness Raising, two Inter-Actors Exchange Visits were initiated by HelpAge's partners-Bangladesh Institute of Theatre Arts (BITA) and Rupantar, who have vast experience on cultural campaigning in several community issues. The visits took place from 21-22 August in Chittagong district (working district of BITA) and from 31 August – 2 September in Khulna district (working district of Rupantar). Field visits to working areas, interaction and cultural performances were the major components of the exchange visits. Cultural Actors partner's staffs based in the nearby districts of Netrokona, Manikgonj, Naogaon and Dinajpur also took part in the visits.

## KPK Government Forms Senior Citizens' Council Involving Older People

*ADA Campaigner included as member of the KPK Senior Citizens' Council*

The Government of KPK Province, Pakistan has established a Senior Citizens' Council under the Senior Citizens Act passed by the Provincial Assembly in 2014. This is the first ever council in the history of Pakistan which will work for the protection of the rights of older people. This is also the first step towards implementation of the Senior Citizens Act 2014, where ADA Campaigners played a key role through their advocacy efforts for approval of the Act. Great news for the campaigners is that the President of Federation of Older People's Associations (FOPAs), Nowshera has been selected as one of the members of the KPK Senior Citizens' Council. Now older people have their own representative on the council. This shows that the government has acknowledged the hard work and contribution of older people.

For details, please get in touch with our Advocacy and Communications Coordinator in Pakistan (Waqas A Qureshi: [waqas.qureshihelpagesa.org](mailto:waqas.qureshihelpagesa.org)).

# Upcoming Events

## Bangladesh

- District level Learning Review Workshop of the Level Campaign.
- Issue based Cultural Campaign at field level
- Mock Drill on Age Inclusive DRR and Emergency Response.
- District level Helping Older People in Emergencies (HOPE) trainings.

## Nepal

- Learning Visit for Inclusion of Older People in Disaster Resilience (IDR) project to Sri Lanka in December 2016.
- SPHERE trainings in Gorkha, Sindupalchowk, Nuwakot and Kathmandu districts in December 2016.

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# Blog

**Older people are making noise, will they be heard? (<http://bit.ly/2hGYmE7>)**  
*Dipendra Raj Sharma, Recovery Programme Manager (Nepal)*

## HelpAge Network Members in South Asia

- Bangladesh Women's Health Coalition (BWHC)
- Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM), Bangladesh
- Resource Integration Centre (RIC), Bangladesh
- Gramin Vikas Vigyan Samiti (GRAVIS), India
- HelpAge India
- HelpAge Sri Lanka
- Pakistan Medico International



Older people during the mass rally organised to support the Campaign to Overcome Ageism in Kathmandu, Nepal.

**HelpAge International is a global network of organisations promoting the right of all older people to lead dignified, healthy and secure lives.**

*Ageing in South Asia* is published four times a year by the HelpAge International South Asia Regional Office to exchange practical information on ageing and development from South Asia, particularly good practice within its network members. Copies are available free of charge. You can also download as a PDF from HelpAge [website](http://www.helpage.org).

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