

# HelpAge People Strategy 2023-2026

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# Introduction

At HelpAge International, we strive to create a world where all older people can lead dignified, healthy and secure lives. We want to promote their wellbeing and inclusion in all aspects of society.

We do this in various ways: by promoting healthy ageing, campaigning to expose ageism, working with governments to protect and promote sustainable incomes and social protection for older people, ensuring that humanitarian response becomes more inclusive and supporting older people so that their rights, voices and dignity can be upheld.

We are the only international organisation doing what we do, but ageing is a topic that touches every single one of us – a majority of us will be older one day.

However, we don't do this alone. We work with partners and a diverse global network of more than 150 organisations across 90 countries, supporting millions of older people to live safe, dignified and healthy lives.

Our Strategy 2030, Ageing in a Just World, sets out how we will work together to shape the future we all share. As countries prepare for and adapt to population ageing, we seek to make a difference at a critical juncture to how societies, economies and institutions adapt to this change.

Guided by our commitment to our values of impact, learning, partnership, and inclusion, we partner with other agents for change to bring systemic change and impact at scale. By acting as a supporter, convener and thought leader, together, we can make an impact that matters for older persons and their communities.

This is a challenging but exciting time for HelpAge International as we seek to transform the ways the organisation works and brings value. In order to deliver on our strategy we are making 3 key strategic shifts:

- Moving fully to partner led programming
- Transitioning from a London Head Office and Regional offices to deliver impact through global teams and a portfolio approach
- Embracing localisation and transitioning our country operations to locally led entities

Our staff – you – are what will enable us to make those strategic changes. We want all staff, wherever they are based, to be engaged, motivated and passionate about the impact we can have. We have therefore developed this People Strategy to promote a culture that

reflects HelpAge's values, to develop a stimulating and motivational working environment for staff, to support the transformation journey and to enable the achievement of the organisation's 2020-2030 Strategic Plan.

Based on the developments that have taken place within the organisation already around culture and ways of working, it sets out our plan for our current and future employees, including how we will recruit and retain staff, support staff during the localisation process, develop the capacity and capability of our staff to become supporters, convenors and thought leaders, provide for the wellbeing of employees and foster a working environment that is inclusive and allows all staff to feel that they belong.

All of us have a role to play in achieving this people strategy, but in particular line managers will be responsible for embedding the changes within their teams and in their collaborations with others. The Human Resources function working in conjunction with the Transformation team will provide the frameworks, tools and policies needed to support our continuous evolution as an employer.

## OUR VISION

**HelpAge has lasting impact on the lives of older people and is also a great place to work. We have a diverse, values driven, engaged, agile and motivated workforce.**

## OUR VALUES

We strive for significant and lasting  
**impact**

We are  
**inclusive**

We work as committed  
**partners**

We are passionate about  
**learning**

HelpAge currently has staff working remotely in all corners of the world – from Argentina to Sri Lanka. We are a globally distributed team spanning 20 countries and many time zones.

## Attracting the best talent

Our high-performance culture relies on the strength of our people. As a result, identifying and attracting the very best talent is central to the success of the organisation in bringing about lasting change to the lives of older people globally. We will therefore:

- **Build the profile and credibility** of the organisation by developing our **employer brand**, ensuring that current and potential new staff are clear that HelpAge is an exceptional employer
- Identify **new and creative ways to advertise** and attract candidates from diverse backgrounds and with the right skills and competencies
- Use the new **HelpAge Competency Framework** as part of the recruitment process to ensure we are appointing new staff with the required values and ways of working

- Improve the **application process** through the use of relevant technology so as to make it a more positive experience for candidates and to reduce the administrative time involved in shortlisting
- **Reduce the possibility of unconscious bias** from our recruitment process, including the introduction of 'blind' shortlisting

## Ways of Working

Staff have told us that they value our new ways of working, which is creating a more flexible, agile and effective organisation. Developing our approach, building on the positives from the previous three years, whilst addressing the challenges, will allow us to improve communication and collaboration, leading to higher engagement and faster decision making.

We will:

- **Review our HR policies** to reflect and support the changing work environment



**Develop new policies** which are aimed at engendering and **supporting a more agile and flexible workforce<sup>1</sup>**

- **Review our reward policies and practices** to enable us to employ people fairly and equitably wherever they are based
- Improve the **induction process** for new staff, recognising many will be working remotely and will need new and different ways of being able to understand and feel part of the organisation.
- **Develop the skills of line managers to enable better work planning** and support staff in being able **to work flexibly** to meet their own personal needs.

## A culture of inclusivity and well being

It is essential that HelpAge has the culture and enabling environment to deliver the 2030 strategy and be an employer of choice.

HelpAge is committed to promoting a culture that values and encourages the contribution of everyone in the organisation. This is supported by a determination to be recognised as an employer of choice, as an organisation that welcomes diversity and challenge and supports the wellbeing of its staff. This work is being led by both the Transformation team and HR. We will therefore:

- Support the effective working of a **global staff council** and continue to develop our working relationships with the UK recognised **Trade Union and country staff councils**
- **Engage with staff on a regular basis** on a wide range of issues relating to employment with HelpAge eg pulse surveys

<sup>1</sup> Agile working focuses on how work is organised, with an emphasis on adaptability and collaboration within and across teams, while flexible working is about tailoring work arrangements to individual needs, with a focus on when and where work is done. Both concepts aim to improve work-life balance and employee satisfaction, but they address different aspects of work flexibility.

- Continue to **enable staff from different countries to be employed legally in different countries** and develop more partnerships with Network members in this respect.
- Continue our work on **Diversity, Inclusion, Equity and Belonging** and introduce Diversity and Inclusion training for staff and line managers (See annual Diversity and Inclusion plan)
- Ensure HelpAge is a **safe place to work** by implementing a best practice **Safeguarding Policy and initiatives** (see Annual Safeguarding Plan)
- Continue to develop and implement **initiatives that support the wellbeing of staff** eg. Stress and Resilience workshops
- **Line managers will support the welfare of the staff in their team** and will be provided with the tools/competencies to do this.



## Learning and development



The skills our employees will require will need to change if we are to fulfil our ambition of becoming supporter, convenor and thought leaders and for all programmes to be partner led. This change will include the way we do our jobs as well as the kind

of tasks we undertake. It is also important that HelpAge provides employees with the opportunity for continuous development.

Our focus will be on providing learning opportunities that are aligned to the organisation's values and objectives and support individual's personal development via a number of means.

We will:

- Refresh and communicate more clearly our **mandatory training programme** and make additions, such as Diversity and Inclusion training, to the Programme.
- Improve the agility and access of learning by identifying and **utilising relevant learning platforms** that are easily accessible and improve the learning experience.
- Implement an **internal Learning and Development** plan that provides relevant opportunities for staff at all levels within the organisation including leadership development for line managers
- Review and update the **Performance Management Policy/Process**, incorporating the HelpAge Competency Framework and a focus on continuous personal and professional development.
- Promote and review the use of **Staff Development funds** available within teams to ensure staff are benefiting from these
- Continue to offer a range of learning opportunities via [Kaya](#), **sharing of useful resources** and information about the context within which HelpAge works.

## Supporting Country Transitions

The country transition process is a key strategic shift for HelpAge and as an organisation we want to ensure that each Country Office has the necessary HR policies and processes in place, staff are involved in any change process, changes are implemented fairly and transparently and staff are provided with the personal and professional support they need. We will:

- Develop a **best practice change management tool kit** to act as the template for any organisational change
- Ensure staff continue to have access to the HelpAge **Employer Assistance programme** and identify other relevant local providers of support eg financial advisors, outplacement support
- Provide internal one to one support to staff as needed.
- **Support Country offices** in having the **necessary HR processes and policies** in place as they transition and provide on-going HR support for an agreed period of time post transition

## Supporting partner led programming

Another strategic shift for HelpAge is to Partner led programming. HelpAge is shifting power to national and local network members and partners and using its position as a convener of a global network to collaborate, strengthen, support, and learn as equals. This will require the way that we are structured, the skills and competencies needed by staff and how HR will work to continuously evolve in light of this shift.



We will:

- Use our learning and development framework to **develop the knowledge and competencies of staff in relation to partner- led programming**

- Review the **structure** of the organisation, with involvement of staff, and implement any changes using **best practice change management methodologies**
- Explore opportunities to support network members and partners with **People Management and HR capacity building**

## What will success look like

- We will be consistently successful in attracting and recruiting a wide range of talent from diverse backgrounds
- Line management will demonstrate exceptional leadership skills and create inclusive team environments in which all staff can thrive
- Our high level talent will be working in agile ways that support the evolution of the organisation. They will feel supported in being able to work flexibly and have the skills and competencies needed to work effectively with partners in a new way.
- They will report high levels of wellbeing and job satisfaction
- They will see their skills and competencies continuously develop through learning interventions and effective performance management
- Country Offices will have successfully transitioned to new local entities in a way that retains the necessary talent to support the success of the new organisations

## Monitoring and Review

The world of work is changing rapidly and we recognise that we will need to monitor and report on our achievements against this strategy on a 6 monthly basis and adjustments made as necessary.

We will use baseline data on recruitment rates, turnover, sickness levels, use of EAP service, pulse survey findings to help us monitor progress.