

Supporter Impact Report 2020-21

Your support
in action





What's in this report?

• Transforming lives: our key achievements in 2020-21	3
• Saving lives: our COVID-19 pandemic emergency response	4
• Hope and care for isolated older people in Vietnam	5
• 2020-21: Where we worked	6
• Vital support for Burundian refugees in Tanzania	8
• Healthcare lifeline for older people in Ukraine	9
• Looking ahead: Our plans for 2022	10
• Special focus: Better health in Kenya and Mozambique	11

Photo credit: Age International, Fabeha Monir

Transforming lives

Our key achievements in 2020-21

Our work towards a world in which women and men everywhere lead dignified, healthy and secure lives as they grow older is only possible thanks to the kindness of donors, like you, who support Age International.

During this uniquely challenging year, together, we have helped millions of older people around the world. This is an amazing achievement. Thank you.



At a glance, in 2020-21:

- 447,000 older people in 14 countries received better health and care services or support through the work of our partner HelpAge and our global network
- 597,600 older people in 20 countries received emergency humanitarian aid through our partners on the ground
- 827 Older People's Associations in 10 countries ensured the delivery of social pensions, health services and other vital entitlements
- 1 million people received a social pension for the first time

Photo credit: Age International, Peter Catton

Saving lives

Our COVID-19 pandemic response

In March 2020, the World Health Organisation declared COVID-19 a global pandemic, changing the world as we know it. The data from the outset was clear – older people had the highest risk of serious illness from the disease.

We understood early on that the disease posed a huge threat to older people already facing significant challenges because of existing health conditions, poverty, and discrimination. For older people around the world already living in fragile places, or having fled conflict, COVID-19 brought renewed fear and hardship.

Thanks to your kindness and the support of other Age International donors, we helped to protect and support older people living in the most vulnerable circumstances across the world.

Over the year we worked tirelessly with our partners to reach older people vulnerable to the disease in over 25 countries across Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America. From starting new emergency COVID-19 projects, to adapting existing programmes, and working with national governments, we have ensured our response suited the needs of older people and their families.

Our coronavirus response: key statistics

- 42,344 older people received improved protection through counselling and access to reporting systems
- 154,440 older people affected by COVID-19 were supported through our partner's health and care projects and interventions in 10 countries
- 432,530 people of all ages received assistance from the HelpAge network



“When coronavirus came the things we did normally, we had to stop. We couldn’t meet other people, water wasn’t there and we had no food... in the community people were afraid of coronavirus.”

Teresa Nyegiery, resident of Mangateen refugee camp, South Sudan

Photo credit: Age International, Peter Caton

Hope and care

for isolated older people in Vietnam

Loneliness and isolation became a familiar story to millions of people across the world as the coronavirus pandemic took hold. Community efforts to stay safe and save lives meant usual connections to family, friends, familiar faces and places, were limited. For those who were already lonely and vulnerable, like many older people, this was very tough.



When COVID-19 began to spread through Asia, Vietnam acted quickly to prevent the spread of the virus, but the lockdown measures left many older people without vital support or connection to their community.

Nguyen Thi My is 67 years old and visually impaired. She has lived alone since the death of her mother 11 years ago, her children and relatives live elsewhere, rarely visiting. She has no phone or television, and limited access to information about the pandemic. Mrs My was diagnosed with breast cancer last year, putting her in one of the most vulnerable groups, as a person living with both a disability and cancer.

Mrs My is a member of her local Intergenerational Self-Help Club (ISHC). Although community activities were paused due to restrictions, thanks to the kindness and support of donors like you, the ISHC was able to continue to support Mrs My at home throughout the pandemic.

If it wasn't for the ISHC, Mrs My would have been completely isolated during the lockdowns. Our role in supporting older people like Mrs My and championing their rights and needs has never been more important than during this global crisis. Your donations, more than ever, give a lifeline to older people across the world. Thank you for your kindness and generosity.

“They (the ISHC’s volunteers) visit every few days to help with the weeding and the garden. Since the day the club was established, I feel much more happy and joyful. They keep visiting and support me and talk to me.”

Nguyen Thi My is 67 years old
Member of our ISHC, Vietnam

Photo credit: HelpAge International

2020-21: Where we worked

Last year we worked in more than 25 countries. Thanks to your support, we were able to give emergency aid to those who needed it most, help more older people have income security, improve healthcare and advocate for older people's rights across the globe.

Gaza

10,000 people benefitted from 2,000 hygiene kits distributed in the Gaza Strip to households with older and at-risk individuals. Through mass communication including radio and social media, we reached 50,000 people on protection and prevention measures for coronavirus.



Photo credit: WSCR

Eurasia and Middle East

Gaza
Jordan
Kyrgyzstan
Lebanon
Moldova
Syria
Ukraine

Asia

Bangladesh
Cambodia
India
Indonesia
Myanmar
Pakistan
Philippines
Singapore
Sri Lanka
Thailand
Vietnam

India

We reached out to almost 40,000 older people to raise awareness of disease prevention, provided livelihood support to 7,000 older people, handed out 6,000 monthly family survival kits, including food, masks and soap, and cared for 2,500 older people in their homes through trained community volunteers.



Photo credit: HelpAge India

Colombia

Colombia

In Colombia, our partners responded to the crisis by providing 750 older people and people with disabilities with hygiene items such as hand sanitisers, gloves and soap. We provided cash transfers and food packages, and raised awareness of disease prevention to thousands using WhatsApp.



Photo credit: HelpAge International

South America

Colombia
Venezuela

Africa

Democratic Republic of Congo
Ethiopia
Kenya
Mozambique
South Sudan
Tanzania
Uganda

Ethiopia

At the start of the pandemic, two of Ethiopia's major cities - Addis Ababa and Hawassa - were identified as high-risk areas for COVID-19 and through our partners on the ground, we were able to reach over 8,000 people in these areas.



Photo credit: HelpAge International, Anteneh Tesfome

Vital support for Burundian refugees in Tanzania

Over the last seven years, thousands of people have fled Burundi to escape violence and conflict, one of the world's poorest nations. Around 270,000 Burundian refugees now live in overcrowded refugee camps in surrounding countries, struggling to rebuild their lives and unable to return home.

Life is hard in the camps and basic necessities are scarce. Older people struggle to fetch firewood, access water, and to carry food and other supplies to their homes. On top of these hardships, they struggle to receive essential healthcare. Even more worryingly, many are at risk of abuse, neglect and discrimination.

Despite these challenges, thanks to the kind support of donors like you, we were able to work with our partners in Tanzania to help even more older people. We gave cash grants to at-risk older people and trained outreach teams to support those who were homebound and isolated, giving them a vital lifeline throughout the pandemic. We strengthened our active ageing clubs and established peer support groups, bringing the community together for care and support.

Veronica's story: a closer look

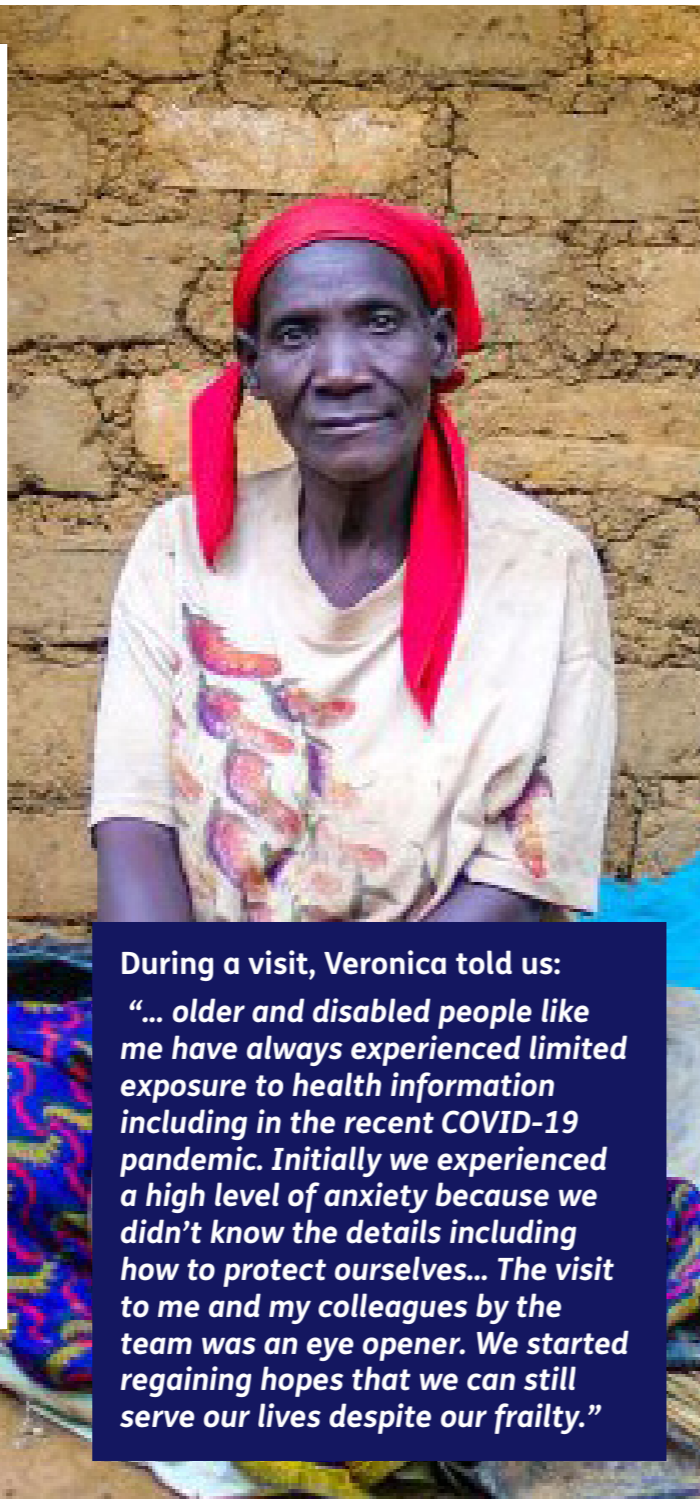
Veronica Burakamphite, 84, lives in the Mtendeli refugee camp, Tanzania. In 2016 she suffered a spinal cord injury that left her unable to walk, take care of herself, collect food and other vital supplies, or meet easily with family and friends.

Following her injury, Age International's partners supported her with hospital referrals, rehabilitation services and practical items including a wheelchair and commode chair so she no longer had to crawl on the ground. During the pandemic, we continued to support Veronica at home.

During a visit, Veronica told us:

"... older and disabled people like me have always experienced limited exposure to health information including in the recent COVID-19 pandemic. Initially we experienced a high level of anxiety because we didn't know the details including how to protect ourselves... The visit to me and my colleagues by the team was an eye opener. We started regaining hopes that we can still serve our lives despite our frailty."

Photo credit: HelpAge International / Ben Small



Healthcare lifeline for older people in Ukraine

Ukraine has been affected by an ongoing conflict since 2014. With support from generous donors like you, we have provided essential support to older people who have been the more severely affected by the conflict. Last year, older people living in the region have had to face a new challenge – fighting coronavirus.

We acted quickly to adapt our work to keep older people safe during the pandemic, recruiting additional staff and volunteers to meet the demand. Despite the additional turmoil COVID-19 brought, in 2020-21:

- 1,100 received homebased care
- 680 older people received assistive products such as canes, walking frames and crutches with elbow support, and toilet chairs
- 915 older people received blankets, mittens, winter socks, waistcoats, and hats to keep warm in the cold winter months
- Over 2,700 older people were provided with food packages to last during lockdown, COVID-19 adapted hygiene kits and COVID-19 information and advice
- We secured hand sanitiser and PPE including 3,000 medical masks and boot covers for health workers, to minimise the risk of introducing coronavirus to older people.

Leonid Cherevan, 83, Ukraine said:

"Quarantine is not easy for everyone. It is only thanks to the care from HelpAge's volunteers that we do not panic. A HelpAge volunteer told me about the first signs and symptoms of the disease, prevention measures, personal hygiene and brought me a special brochure. Now I strictly adhere to these rules. Thanks to HelpAge volunteers, who provided us with masks and disinfectants, I do not feel so scared. I feel protected."

Photo credit: Age International



Looking ahead

Our plans for 2022

What you helped us achieve last year was incredible. The experiences of older people over the past year have emphasised just how vital the work of Age International is. As the world comes to terms with the long-term effects of COVID-19 we are setting our sights on 2022 and how we can most effectively help those who need us most.

Improving access to clean water and improved sanitation in Ethiopia

Though our partner, HelpAge International, we'll be working in the Borena Zone, in the south of Ethiopia to address the critical needs of those most at-risk living in temporary camps for people who have been internally displaced and their host communities.

Due to years of recurrent drought, communities in both the camps and surrounding area are facing food and water shortages, which make them more vulnerable to COVID-19. Our aim is to help 35,000 people through activities which include, improving access to clean water and sanitation facilities, direct support for people with disabilities and awareness raising on the spread of and protection against coronavirus. We'll also be distributing PPE to the community.

Ensuring older women are included

The UK Government will soon decide its priorities for its new UK International Development Strategy, which sets out how the UK will achieve its ambitions to end extreme poverty around the world. For the strategy to succeed, the Government must ensure that everyone is included in their plans - and this includes older women.

Current strategies do not recognise the roles of older women across the globe, especially those living in poorer areas, who are carrying out relentless paid and unpaid work with little or no choice and often without support. We are calling on the UK Government to recognise older women's rights and needs in their International Development Strategy so that all older women can live with dignity and be given the help and support they need as equal members of society.

Helping older people to survive and recover from humanitarian disasters

When disaster strikes, Age International and our partners are ready to respond, helping older people access the emergency aid that they need in the immediate aftermath. But we're not just in it for the short term, we are working in several countries affected by ongoing crises, including Ethiopia and Ukraine. We'll continue helping older people in crisis rebuild their lives, helping them to find hope again.

Building community resilience for older people

Our Sponsor a Grandparent (SAG) programme has been helping older people and their communities since 1973. Currently operating in Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, Kenya, India and Myanmar the programme ensures older people can receive community support tailored to their needs, whether this is through self-help groups, help and guidance to start a new business, or simple cash payments to buy essentials such as food and medicine or to pay schools fees for grandchildren. Whatever the challenges that 2022 bring, our SAG programme will be there, supporting older people in the community.

Ensuring every older person gets the vaccine they need

Many governments around the world have said that they'll prioritise older people as the COVID-19 vaccination programmes are rolled out. Our partners will be working to ensure that these promises are met and the older people who need the vaccine the most are able to get them.

Special focus

Better health in Kenya and Mozambique

In 2022, our Better Health for Older People programme enters its fourth and final year. The project supports older people in Kenya and Mozambique to access healthcare tailored to the needs of older people. Over the last three years, thanks to the generous support of donors like you, we have made significant progress and thousands of older people have seen improvements to their personal health and wellbeing.

This year, we will build on our success by:

- Training 120 more healthcare professionals in Mozambique and Kenya
- Rolling out community health worker training, increasing access to care suited to older people where they live
- Launching healthy ageing policies and plans in both Kenya and Mozambique – National level policies are an important step in creating sustainable change and strengthening healthcare systems for older people.

By the end of the project, we will reach 29,000 older people through improved healthcare and built the foundations for national change.

This is an amazing testimony to what your donation and those of other donors' support can accomplish.

Alberto's story

"91-year-old Alberto Sambo lives with his wife in the town of Chibuto, Mozambique. In 1974, he started experiencing problems with his eyesight and was diagnosed with cataracts, eventually losing his vision. In 2020, thanks to the Better Health project, Alberto was referred to a hospital for treatment, and for the first time in 21 years he could see. Overcome with joy, he began to cry. Alberto's life has been transformed. He feels a free man and proud that he is now able to help his family again."

Photo credit: Age International, Peter Caton

Thank you for your ongoing support



Photo credit: Age International, Peter Caton

Thank you

During this uniquely challenging year, you have stuck with us, and we can't thank you enough for your support.

Thank you for standing alongside older people to ensure they receive the help they need.

Together, we have achieved so much.

Over to you

We would love to hear your thoughts on this Impact Report or if there are any topics you would like to hear more about in the future?

Please email our friendly team at contact@ageinternational.org.uk or call **0800 032 0699** should you wish to give us some feedback.

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Disclaimer: In 2020-21 it has been particularly challenging to obtain photos of the people we have helped and in some cases, the photos used in this report do not match the case studies.

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