

Annual Report 2014

**HelpAge
Canada**

age helps

Helping older people lead healthy and dignified lives

You might recognize the words above as the vision statement of HelpAge Canada, the words that guide everything we do. In 2015, HelpAge Canada will be celebrating its 40th anniversary. For all this time we have been working to improve and maintain the quality of life of vulnerable older persons in Canada and around the world.

HelpAge Canada believes in the concept of Age Helps – putting the experience and needs of older persons at the center of our work, helping them live healthy, secure, active and dignified lives. We bring about change by empowering people and providing assistance. Restoring eyesight, responding to basic needs or rebuilding homes are some of the ways we accomplish that goal. In Canada, we address social isolation by having seniors talk about aging, sharing their knowledge and stories, and by supporting interactions with youth.



We are a founding member of HelpAge International, a leading provider of humanitarian relief for older persons, and belong to a network of 66 similar organizations around the world. All our international projects are done in partnership with other HelpAge organizations or local groups, nearly all of them religious institutions.

At HelpAge Canada, we focus on isolated people, whether it be physical, emotional, social or economic isolation. In our country, an isolated senior might live in a comfortable residence but have no support network of friends or family nearby. In countries such as Congo, Kenya or India, older persons are often isolated from the economy, as well as from access to health care and other vital services.

In Canada and abroad, this ongoing work could not take place without your support.



A member of

**HelpAge
International**
age helps

An active force for positive change

Jack Panozzo
Chairperson

HelpAge Canada continues to grow and expand its work with partners in communities in Canada such as in Nunavut, as well as in developing countries in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. Its goal is simple: to improve the quality of life of vulnerable older persons.

We are grateful for the many people who have joined those who provide the support HelpAge Canada requires to ensure that its important work continues, as it provides support and outreach to vulnerable, isolated seniors.

As chair of the HelpAge Canada Board, I want to thank you and all our many donors and volunteers as well as staff and board members for all they continue to do, making HelpAge Canada an active force for positive change. Still, we need to do more and we can with your help.

Many older persons in regions such as Congo, Kenya and India, for example, find themselves isolated and marginalized in their own communities often with little access to health care and other social services.

On October 1st, HelpAge Canada launched the Global AgeWatch Index that gauges the quality of



life of older persons. Prepared by HelpAge International, it shows our strength as part of an international network. Canada ranked 4th, but was 7th in income security and 9th in enabling environment. That means many older persons here remain isolated physically, emotionally, socially, economically and may live in poverty, be maltreated or suffer needless poor health.

The world is ageing fast. Today there are more adults over 60 than children under five. By 2030, there will be more people over 60 than under 10. There is clearly much more for HelpAge Canada to do and with your help and support, we can do it.

Your generosity keeps us going

Jacques Bertrand
Executive Director

When thinking of people for whom HelpAge made a big difference this year, I want to first mention Léonie, an older African woman who was sexually assaulted a number of years ago. Now, however, she says with a wonderful smile, "I am no longer a victim". I also think of Jamni, a 65-year-old Indian woman, who can now see clearly for the first time in years.

In the Caribbean, courageous Mona, a mother of 11 children, was trained in physiotherapy by our Canadian volunteers and now heals older people in her remote village.

In Kenya, young Errick completed Grade 8 with such high marks that he can now attend one of the best schools in the country. Errick is supported by older persons who launched a micro-business a few years ago supported by HelpAge (p. 4).

When I think of donors, Joan, who lives in Vancouver, also comes to mind for her dedication to income-generating activities that empower older persons. I also met Calgary donors who have made key projects possible such as cataract surgeries, home building and physiotherapy treatments.

Then there are the volunteers who give so much to help others. Those who support the Nunavut Society or contribute to our communications and translation. Those who go to other countries to monitor our sponsorship program or train local physiotherapists.



Just as vital is the role of dedicated board members who take on tasks and responsibilities that ensure the smooth running and development of HelpAge Canada.

The ways and possibilities of bringing some light into someone's life are, of course, limitless.

This summer, I visited some of our partners in India, a country that has accomplished much in economic terms, but where millions of older persons remain in absolute poverty. In a remote village, I was shocked to see a woman with a mental disorder who had been sitting outdoors alone for the past thirty years. Because there is so much to accomplish, we are deepening our partnership with HelpAge India.

Whether in Canada or abroad, the people we help are the poor, the vulnerable and the isolated. In the years ahead, we want to expand our efforts in Canada for isolated seniors. Social isolation affects an estimated one million Canadians and often leads to physical and mental issues. By working preventatively, we can help avoid problems later on. Fortunately, Canada has many organizations doing amazing work in reaching out to seniors. We want to do more with them, as well as work with businesses.

When all that is said, we are very grateful for you, our donors. It is your generosity that keeps us going. Thank you.

**HelpAge
Canada**

age helps

Registration Number: 11895 5921 RR0001

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The gift of sight...

Thanks to a generous donation from an Alberta couple, HelpAge Canada and HelpAge India are able, again this year, to fund cataract surgeries for older persons. This year's 600 beneficiaries will be selected from among the poor, who could never otherwise afford such a service.

With their eyesight returned, a new life begins for them and they can often now support their families and grandchildren. We are also enhancing our partnership with HelpAge India, which is recognized as one of the best-run charities in that country.



Thanks to an Alberta couple, 600 more people will soon recover their sight.

...the gift of water

Donations from the same Alberta couple allowed us to contribute to a project that installed 130 water collection systems next to houses that had been built the year before in the Fond Jean Noel area, in the South-East of Haiti. Capturing and preserving water is absolutely essential for the health and nutrition of this remote community, where many inhabitants are older persons. This project was carried out by HelpAge International.



Until HelpAge installed these tanks, access to water was a major problem in this remote corner of Haiti.

Your gift will change a life
www.helpagecanada.ca
 1-800-648-111

Love and continued care:

HelpAge sponsorship program

Every older person is entitled to the basic necessities of life. One of our core initiatives remains the sponsorship program for older persons that we run in nine countries: Jamaica, Grenada, Dominica, Haiti, Congo, Kenya, Sri Lanka, India and the Philippines. A sponsorship of \$34 per month provides older persons restored hope in their lives; their happiness comes in knowing that people, even those far away, care about them.



Mr. Martin Jean Bart, 76.



Mrs. Cicilia Jeyaraj, 74.

Cicilia Jeyaraj, aged 74, is now living at Little Sisters of The Poor in Batticaloa, Sri Lanka. She joined our program in 2014. Cicilia used to earn a living as a seamstress, but due to her poor health she could no longer work and had no source of income. She also needed to use a walker. Your monthly donation can contribute to providing someone like Cicilia

with food, clothing, and medical attention.

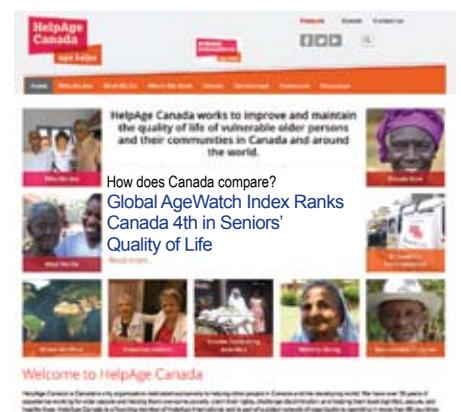
In Camp Perrin (in Haiti's South-West) our local partner, the St.Vincent de Paul organization, looks after Martin Jean Bart, 76. In his latest update, Mr Bart said to his Canadian sponsor: "I only have my prayers to thank you with, but God will reward you for what you are doing for me."

Bequests



HelpAge Canada needs your support in planning for the future. Planning a gift in your will can help us continue our work to empower older persons.

Visit our new website:
helpagecanada.ca



Ending sexual violence

Actress and activist Angelina Jolie greets HelpAge Canada partner, Julienne Lusenge, at the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, held in London in June.

Julienne is president of SOFEPADI, a women's group that we support in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In recognition of her courageous efforts on behalf of women of all ages, she was recently awarded the French Legion of Honour.

Rape and sexual violence is a major problem in eastern Congo that also affects older women.



You can sponsor an older victim of sexual violence or a retired activist of SOFEPADI.

“No longer a victim”

It is astounding how little is required to transform a life. A few years ago, Léonie, a Congolese widow caring for six grandchildren, was sexually assaulted by three youths. Léonie never dared to return to her village and her life could have been destroyed. But our local partner, SOFEPADI, stood by her and at the end of 2013 she began to benefit from our sponsorship program. She now buys and resells palm oil and charcoal. Léonie also made a deposit on a small plot of land where she hopes to build a little



house. In March 2014, she was smiling and her eyes were bright. She had reclaimed a zeal for life. “I am no longer a victim,” she said.

Grandparents sending children to school

Our Kenya micro-business program provides a wonderful example of how older persons can contribute to the well-being of others, even with very limited means. The St. Andrews Micro-Business group, made up of six older persons who buy and sell maize, pays for the fees, text books and uniforms of 14 children. One of them, Errick Ouma, has not only been able to stay at school but was the best student in his zone (of 22 schools) and will be able to attend one of the best schools in Kenya. One day he hopes to become a doctor.

The St. Andrews Microbusiness Group is one of six Microbusiness Projects that received start-up grants from HelpAge. Your continued support will help these groups maintain their commitment to the approximately 70 orphans they care for so that – like Errick – their hopes and dreams can be realized.



Young Errick Ouma and HelpAge Canada Board Member Phyllis Eleazar.

A real home for the most marginalized

Six older women who belong to the Twa community, a ‘Pygmy’ group in Eastern Congo, finally have a real home with walls, a roof and basic furniture. They used to live on the ground in huts made of leaves, while younger members of the community had small houses. The Twas are one of the most marginalized indigenous groups in Africa. Our Congolese partner, SOFEPADI, managed the construction of these six houses.



Mrs. Alimoya Bambahuka before...



...and now in front of her new home.



Transferring knowledge

Thanks to HelpAge volunteers Michel Noel de Tilly and Suzanne Provost, a network of physiotherapists, the only one of its kind, is active in Haiti's north-east. For years, Michel and Suzanne have been going to Haiti to train 28 physiotherapists who in turn treat hundreds of older persons throughout the year. In the town of Cap-Haitien, we also provide food twice a month for 60 homeless older persons who come in for a physiotherapy session.



Isolated seniors: a priority

HelpAge Canada has considerable experience in addressing the issue of isolated seniors in Ottawa, Nunavut and Quebec City. This is going to be a major priority for us across Canada over the coming years.

Almost a million Canadians over 65 feel left out, isolated from others or lacking companionship.

Social isolation involves few social contacts and social interaction, no one you feel comfortable to talk with, no one to turn to in times of need. The lack of social relationships contributes to poor health and mortality.

As we age, there are a variety of factors that may put us at risk

of isolation: disabilities, loss of a spouse, living alone, reduced social networks, transportation issues, place of residence, poverty, low self-esteem, poor health, gender, ethnicity, abuse, ageism and more.

The very nature of this issue makes it difficult to identify isolated seniors when the traditional outreach methods have not worked. Unfortunately, many are not being identified until they arrive at the emergency and need to be hospitalized.

We know the consequences for our seniors, their families and the community at large if this trend is not reversed.



Isolated seniors

it concerns all of us

Global AgeWatch Index 2014

Global coverage for the HelpAge International Index

Canada's media gave extensive coverage to the launch of the Global AgeWatch Index on October 1st 2014, United Nations International Day of Older Persons. The Canadian launch took place in Ottawa with the Honourable Alice Wong, Minister of State (Seniors), Ann McSweeney, Executive Director of the Good Companions Seniors' Centre, and HelpAge Canada Executive Director, Jacques Bertrand. The Global AgeWatch Index is produced by HelpAge International in London and measures the well-being of seniors in 96 countries according to income security, health, capacity and the enabling environment. This year Canada ranked 4th overall, up one rank from 2013. The Index also received a lot of media attention around the world.



Jacques Bertrand, HelpAge, Ann McSweeney, the Good Companions, Alice Wong, federal minister for Seniors.

In Nunavut:

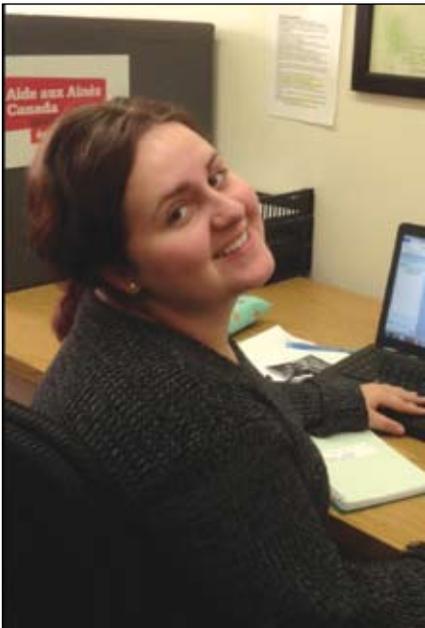
A unique consultation process

As we are writing this report, the Nunavumi Inutuqait Katujjiqatigiingit/Nunavut Seniors' Society, which was set up through an extensive, multi-language consultation process supported by HelpAge Canada, is preparing for its first Annual General Meeting. The purpose of the Society is to be the voice of the needs and rights of older persons, a substantial agenda in this immense territory. Board member and Secretary, Cameron McGregor, writes:

"Here, the process of 'nation-building' is not yet complete, nor will it be until all Inuit and First Nations people are fully advantaged by the institutions that service the fundamental needs of all Canadians.

The process of respectfully consulting with Nunavut Elders on their needs and wishes included staff time, along with their essential inter-cultural and developmental experience and values. Diverse languages, local customs related to community consultations, frail communications infrastructure and high organizational expenses might have discouraged a less-committed organization. HelpAge Canada has respected local conditions and is regarded with utmost confidence by all who work together for completion of the funding of the Nunavut Senior's Society. Such a social development project involving cooperation from inside and outside the Territory is quite unique in the story of Nunavut."

Bringing seniors and youth together



Kelsie Winsor, 16, our first Student Ambassador.

HelpAge is reaching ever more Ottawa residents through projects that involve people of all ages. The theatre group Spect-Act-ular, for instance, will hold its 150th performance in January 2015. Since 2011, the 20 volunteer seniors recruited by Natalie Fraser visit groups of older persons and bring up issues related to aging, often zeroing in on topics that older persons are usually reluctant to talk about. This is done through interaction and proves so successful that the group is

often asked to return to the same location for repeat performances.

In November 2014, a small group of volunteers called “Seen Your Citizen?” began going into schools to discuss ageism with youth, a great way to avoid stereotyping. HelpAge is also carrying out regular intergenerational activities between older persons and children, including visits to museums and shows at the National Arts Centre. Other seniors and young people are also brought together through a mentoring program that allows the older ones to share their knowledge and experience. In the fall of 2014, HelpAge welcomed its first Student Ambassador. Kelsie Winsor, a 16-year-old student from Ottawa. She is doing a cooperative education program at our office and one of her tasks is to help raise awareness about our aging population in local schools.

At the end of 2014, a local publisher will put together stories collected by HelpAge from dozens of older persons who are eager to be included in a new book called “Our Stories, Their Stories”. The idea behind this project is that our seniors have wonderful memories that deserve to be written down for the younger generation.

They’ll never forget Micheline

Located nine hours from Port-au-Prince is the town of Bombardopolis. Several times, Micheline Courtemanche, 70, a retired nurse from Mont-Laurier has made the trip to this remote corner of Northwestern Haiti to provide care to the seniors who live there. Year-after-year Micheline, along with her sister Francine (also a retired nurse), have returned to Bombardopolis to meet with the 60 people we sponsor there.



Francine and Micheline Courtemanche.

All the seniors in the area know Micheline and Francine and are always delighted to see them.

Imagine yourself in the position of those who live in these remote areas of Haiti. You live in the hills of an isolated region; the nearest village is two hours away by foot. Once a year two Canadian nurses come to visit and check on your health. All this is made possible because someone in a country far away chose to sponsor you for \$34 a month.

Micheline and Francine grew extremely attached to

Bombardopolis and even raised funds to build a school there. It seems that because of people like them, the whole community of Mont-Laurier has rallied to support Haiti.

Sadly, the seniors and students of Bombardopolis did not see Micheline this year since she passed away from cancer in June. However this has not stopped her sister from persevering with their work: “Micheline told me not to abandon the seniors.” And so this summer, Francine undertook a new mission to Bombardopolis, just as Micheline would have wished.



Two generations at the War Museum.

Business partnerships

Business support can make a big difference for HelpAge Canada by bringing in income or reducing its costs. If you own a business and want to help, please contact us.

A full program in Québec City



For several years now, the Aide aux Aînés group in Québec has been holding activities that bring together older persons born in other countries. The capital’s region offers many points of interest and visits to the Citadel, the island of Orléans and the Aquarium were all on the program this year. The group also organized conferences, one about WWII and another about music from the Andes, and reserved other evenings for dancing the tango and having fun together.

Our numbers

**HelpAge
Canada**

age helps

HelpAge Canada

People sponsored through HelpAge across the world: 838

Canadian donors who sponsor a grandparent: 765

Countries where our Sponsorship Program operates in: 9

HelpAge partner organizations for sponsorships: 26

Sponsored grandparents in Haiti: 213

Sponsored grandparents in India: 199

Sponsored grandparents in Kenya: 153

Sponsored grandparents in Jamaica: 108

Sponsored grandparents in Sri Lanka: 71

Sponsored grandparents in Dominica: 67

Sponsored grandparents in the Philippines: 19

Sponsored grandparents in Grenada: 6

Sponsored grandparents in the Democratic Republic of Congo: 2

Cataract surgeries performed in India and Haiti thanks to a donation from an Alberta couple: 600

Average number of persons brought together at each activity held by the Quebec City HelpAge Group: 50

Number of performances done by the volunteer theatre group Spect-ACT-ular between

August 2011 and December 2014: 150

Volunteers at the HelpAge Canada office: 6

Regular employees at the HelpAge Canada office: 4

Number of years HelpAge Canada has been established: 39

HelpAge Canada Financial Data as of March 31, 2014 (\$) *

Percentage of revenue used for HelpAge administration: 6.2%

Percentage of revenue used for fundraising: 9.0%

Revenues: \$776,647

Expenditures: \$851,663

* Financial statements for 2014 were prepared and verified by the accounting firm Collins Barrow.

Reports available at: www.helpagecanada.ca



**HelpAge
International**

age helps

HelpAge International and its world-wide network

Older persons receiving emergency relief or recovery support: 230,000

Number of years HelpAge International has been established: 31

Number of affiliated groups: 100+

Number of affiliated countries: 66

Number of older persons receiving health, HIV or care services across 30 countries: 673,000

Years remaining before the number of people aged 60 and over will exceed 1 Billion: 8

