‘Rapid population ageing: a global call to action’

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The reality

Certainly some truth

Relative ageing; babies; pensions

‘Frail’? Just a fraction of over-60s

A global phenomenon
Population aged (a) 60+ and (b) 80+, world regions

(a)

(b)
An incomplete transformation

Rights, tackling ageism
Changing image
More positive view
Triumph of humanity

But…
TIME BOMB
How population aging will transform our world and why we must act before it's too late

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

F&D FINANCE & DEVELOPMENT
AGING IS THE REAL POPULATION BOMB

The Observer
Ageing planet: the new demographic timebomb

MARK ADLER
Tackling the negativity around population ageing

Preventing the liberation of older people

‘A demographic solution’?

Holistic, joined-up, all-of-age, life-course, systemic
Paradigm shifts

20c: rapid pop. growth; cheap labour; modernism and industrial growth
21c: different worlds (slow and fast growth/ageing)

Cannot afford to squander human capital

Multidimensional change

Demographic metabolism (Lutz)

SE Asia, 60+, Edu attainment (WIC 2018)
Some ‘easy’ wins (if not always politically easy)

Better measures and more careful language

*Prospective ageing; NTAs (inc. time); Dependency*

Reforming existing stretched health and welfare systems

*Sustainability; equitable?*

Gerontechnology

Active ageing; age-friendly cities; anti-ageism
Work and health

Not just working/living longer; working/living better
Age discrimination; recognising (unpaid) work in older age
More flexible older work opportunities; (reverse) mentoring

Lifelong learning to counter skills obsolescence
Work, health and active-ageing in a virtuous cycle
Technology to adapt; match
Second Demographic Dividend
China’s Aging Population Is a Major Threat to Its Future

Li An Xiao, 85, and his wife swim with friends on Hainan Island, known as China’s Florida.
Ageing as an intergenerational, life-course process

Not just better work (and health) for older persons
Younger/middle-aged: older persons of tomorrow

*Life-course/cycle approach to ageing; early investment*

But also supporting the systems of *today*
Maximising opportunities and releasing potential at *all* ages

*For own life-course*
*For intra- and inter-generational redistribution*

A fantasy?
Ageing as a driver of growth (?)

(Second Demographic Dividend)
First Demographic Dividend

Favourable pop. characteristics
Automatic? Human capital, job rich growth

Can be squandered entirely

Window of opportunity: widen, lengthen

Learn from mistakes (equity, inclusivity etc)

Get old before get rich? Alternative paradigm
A call to action

Ageing is becoming an ever greater global issue
Self-fulfilling apocalyptic prophecy?

Reimagine population ageing:

New population paradigm
Simply a reality of the 21st century
Can respond in different ways
Has to be all-of-society, all-of-age
How do we do that in practice?

Population ageing is not (only) about older people
Proactively change language and narrative
Need to convince economists, politicians
Talk their language

Growth, opportunity, productivity...

But admit that systematic, holistic, intergenerational change is needed
Requires working across generations for all to succeed
Bridging the generational ‘divide’

Crisis in youth work, voice, mental health around the world
Counterintuitive for groups such as HelpAge to engage in this?
No! Intergenerational activities long in existence
Opportunity to become the global lead in this area of redefining population ageing.