

SYMPOSIUM ON “FUTURE OF AGEING”

**Convened by ILC Singapore and the NUS–Tsao
Foundation, Ageing Research Initiative,**

**Empowerment and social
participation of older people in
the future – ILC-India & ILC-UK**

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June 2013

1.The current state of play of the sub-theme in your country

Demographics

Empowerment perspectives and reducing isolation

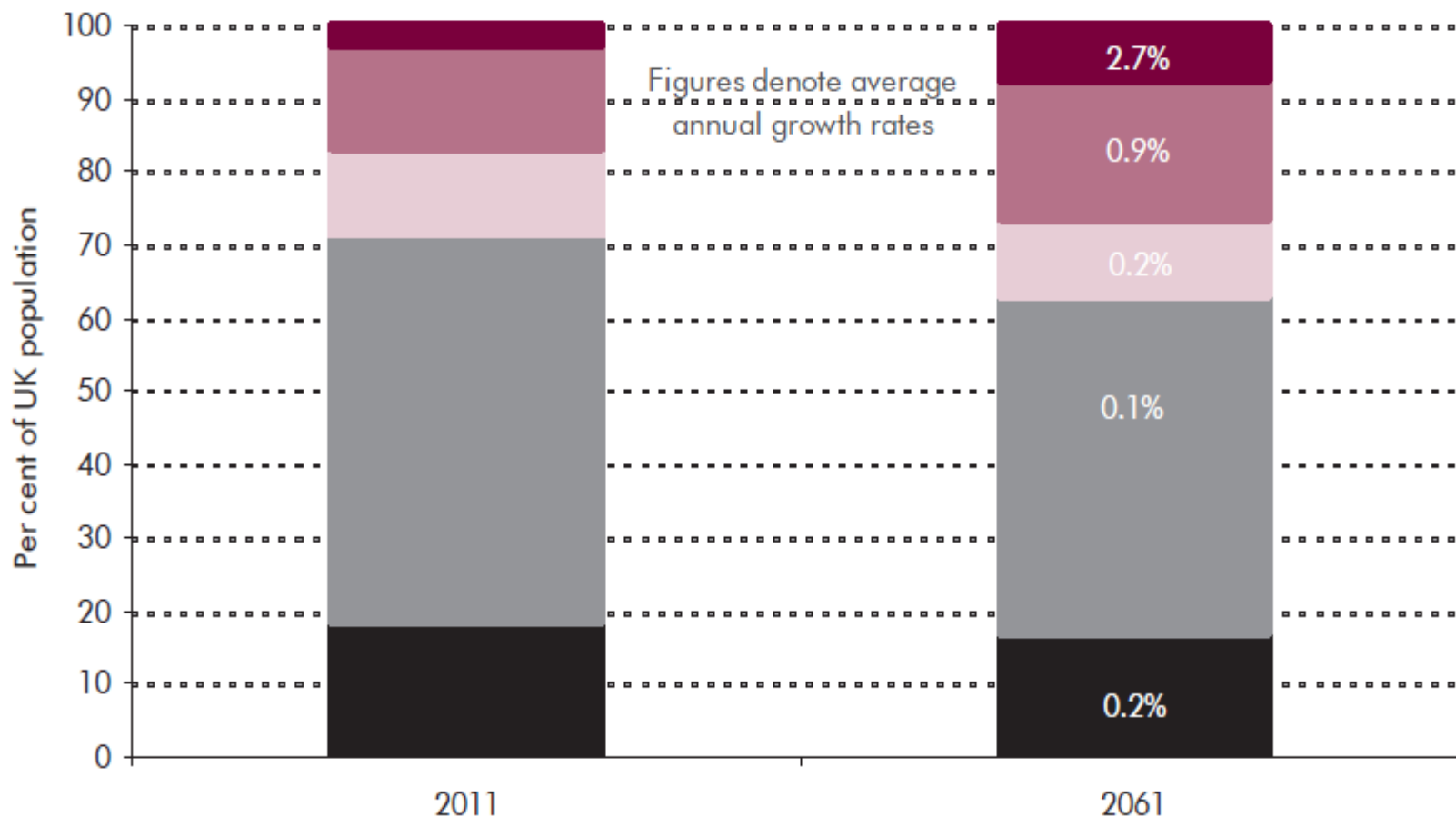
Collectivisation and engagement by and with older people

Associated drivers such as older people's Health, wellbeing, education and income/employment.

Volunteering

UK Population Change

Chart 3.1: Projected changes in the size of population age groups



Source: ONS

■ 0-15

■ 16-54

■ 55-64

■ 65-84

■ 85+

Source: - OBR *Fiscal Sustainability Report* – July 2011

The Ageing UK Population

- Within 20 years, nearly 25% will be aged over 65
- Labour market participation for the 50-64 age group has increased in the last 15 years
- The percentage of workers aged 65 and over has doubled in the last decade
- People are now spending an average of 7 years longer in retirement than in the 1970s. What proportion of these extra years will be healthy?
- Those aged 65 and over are the biggest consumers of NHS resources and are responsible for more than half of PCT spending
- At the 2010 UK General Election (4) 44 per cent of those aged 18-24 voted and 55 per cent of those aged 25-34. Contrast this with the 76 per cent of those aged over 65 who voted and it is clear to see why older people's opinions and favour weigh heavily on the mind of the UK political class

Population Change In India

Figure A1a: Age-sex Pyramid, India 2001

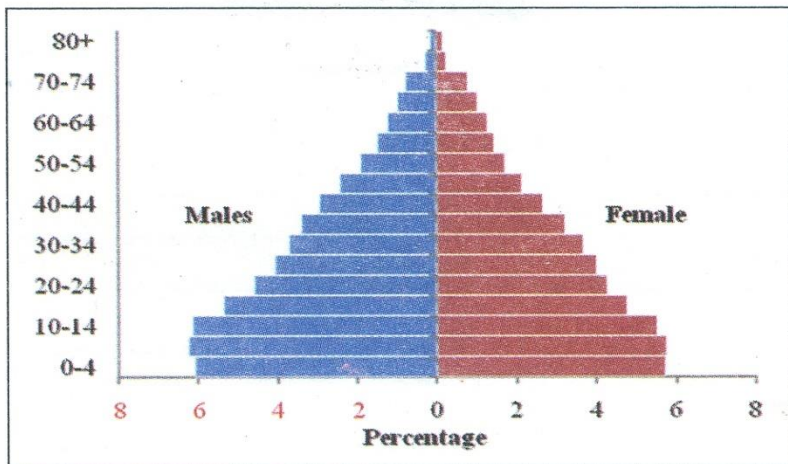


Figure A1b: Age-sex Pyramid, India 2011

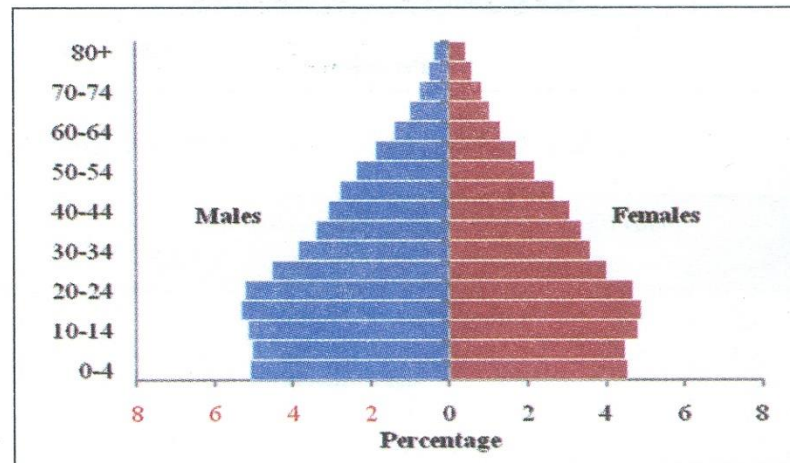


Figure A1c: Age-sex Pyramid, India 2021

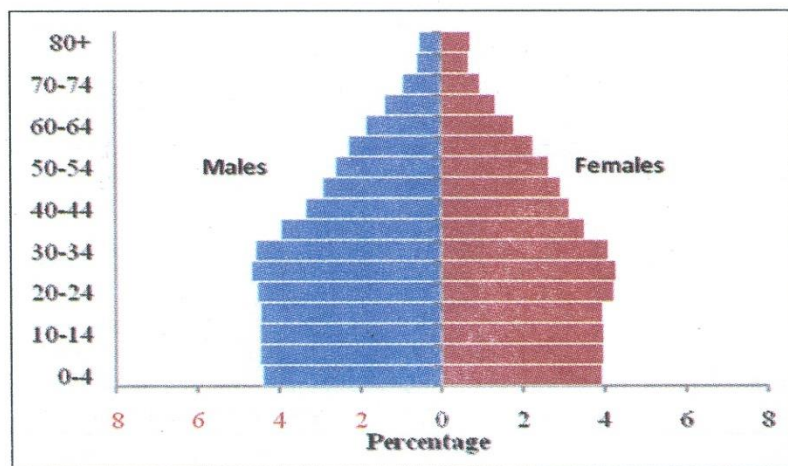
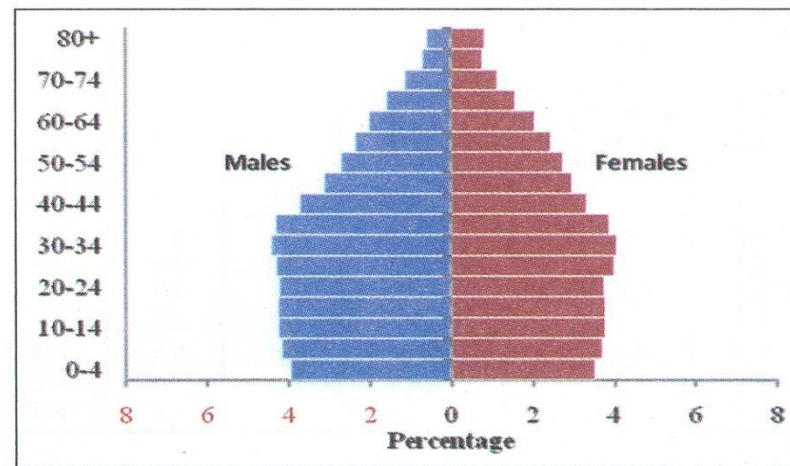


Figure A1d: Age-sex pyramid, India 2026



Source:-Subaiya, Lekha and Bansod, Dhananjay. W., December 2011, "Demographics of Population Ageing in India", BKPAI Working Paper No. 1, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), New Delhi.)

The Ageing Indian Population

India will have 315 million older persons over the age of sixty by 2050!

Indian society is still slumbering as far as the issue of population ageing is concerned. Advocacy efforts by voluntary organizations and by Senior Citizens Organisations are only slowly penetrating the minds and consciousness of the Indian population.

The proportion of the population aged 60 and over in India today (88 Million) is 8.8% of the total population and this is projected to increase to 20% (315 million) by the year 2050 (2). Similarly the life-expectancy at birth for males in 1996 was 61.6 years and for females it was 62.2 years, and today, in 2013, it is 66.08 years for males and 68.33 years for females.

2. What may be envisioned under this sub-theme as being in the best interests of older people, their well-being and quality of life? How should ILC centres seek to influence/determine policy in this regard?

ILC Global Alliance

In countries like India, where food, clothing, shelter, money and health services are the more important concerns of those for whom mere survival is a herculean task, the concepts of self-determination and participation as the rights of the older persons, may be construed as 'unwanted luxuries

An older person has the right to be empowered, to assume responsibility, to be active and participatory, to be independent and to lead a life of dignity and self-fulfilment. No one has the 'power' to 'empower older people -it must be established within them. Human Rights thus are the security net which empowers every individual and prevent the concept of 'charity' from arising.

Empowerment perspectives - UK

- Age UK – Falls Reduction & Improving Mobility and Independence through outdoor exercise
- UK Design Council's 'Independence Matters' programme & 'Living Well with Dementia' challenge,
- The Campaign to End Loneliness
- The Intergenerational Futures APPG
- Beth Johnson Foundation,
 - Centre for Intergenerational Practice

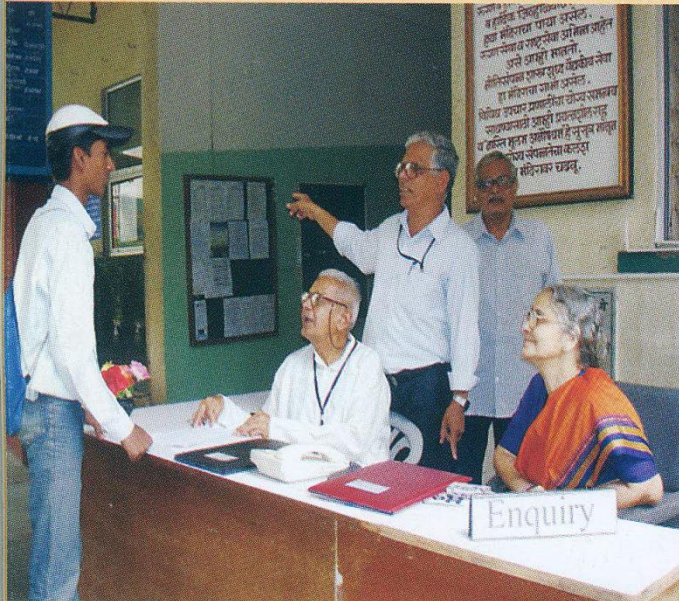
3. What strategies have worked/are working in your country that have, or have not been successful in addressing challenges for older people in this area? What evidence can you share of the effectiveness and impact of these strategies – with a view to their potential for replication in other countries?

ILC-India encourages and supports the productive work done by senior citizens' and their organizations through its ILC-I Awards.

(ILC-I) initiated the movement of volunteerism by the elderly to effect qualitative change in society through the use of the knowledge, wisdom and experience of its senior citizens, by putting their services in their areas of skill, interest or expertise to organizations that require them. The system, is administered by the Volunteers Bureau, works by matching the interests of the older persons, such as educational or financial skills with the requirements of local organizations This initiative was officially recognized by the Indian Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment as an 'Innovative Initiative' and ILC-I was commissioned to hold orientation and training programmes for the setting up of such 'Volunteer Bureaus' in the northern and southern zones of India.

UK – Volunteering, Health, Employment, Education, Inter-generational collaboration

Older Volunteers in India



Health in UK - Exercising Outdoors



Employment UK - B&Q



B&Q employs 39,000 people, spanning from age 16 to 93 with over 25% of its workforce aged 50 or more, balanced with 22% being under 24 years of age. They were the first British company to adopt an active over 50s recruitment policy and are a founder member of the UK Employers Forum for Age

4. What are some other related challenges in your country?

A major problem in India is the level of illiteracy in the country which makes the task of advocating old age empowerment more daunting.

An important means of developing an age-friendly society is through the older persons themselves becoming more proactive and empowered, and this has begun.

The draft 'National Policy on Senior Citizens' was issued in 2011 and the senior citizens movement in India has an umbrella organization, The All India Senior Citizens' Confederation (AISCCON) which has been very proactive in mobilizing senior citizens to participate in productive activities.

In Britain there is a huge amount of work needed to educate people about what all of us can do through policy and practice to enhance the quality of life and encourage good relationships between the generations.

The UK older consumer market is expected to grow by 81 per cent by 2030 yet we have a consumer marketplace which frequently fails to meet the needs of an ageing population. As well as contributing to isolation and loneliness, a lack of transport is one of the biggest barriers to older people's participation in the consumer market. Also products and services can be made more attractive to the older consumer by the simple use of inclusive design principals.

Summary

Moving towards an age neutral society will mean that we can support those who are not able to contribute owing to their reduced capability, for example, through ill health. At the same time, we can acknowledge the considerable contribution, to local communities and society as a whole, made by many older people and work towards this model becoming the norm.

Additionally, decision-makers need to recognise that, as well as the boost to quality of life, the benefits in physical and cognitive health that can be the result of remaining involved, engaged and empowered at all ages.

Both ILC-UK and ILC-India are active on all these fronts but while we have come a long way, there is still plenty of work remaining to be done before older people become sufficiently empowered to make a difference to their own outcomes and those of the citizenry as a whole