Ageing and disability

When you give to older people they give back
The century of ageing

In 2015, c.900 million people worldwide will be 60 and older

By 2050 projected total is nearly 2 billion - 1 in every 5 of the earth’s inhabitants

Two-thirds of older people already live in LAMICs

By 2050 this figure will rise to nearly three-quarters
The future that’s here already

% of population

- Older people
- Young children
The demographic transition

• Falling mortality

• Falling fertility

• urbanisation and migration

• Population ageing
The rise of NCDs

Shift from infectious diseases to noncommunicable diseases

NCDs increase mortality:

- Heart disease and stroke
- diabetes
- chronic pulmonary obstructive disease

and disability:

- blindness, hearing loss
- mobility loss
- cognitive loss - dementia
Key issues for older people

• Many enter old age in poor health –
  physical labour
  poor diet/environment
  multiple pregnancies

• Health services are rarely “age friendly” –
  physically inaccessible
  low levels of knowledge
  negative attitudes
The challenge of ageing & health

WHO - health “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being” – does not describe ageing and health

MDGs focus on maternal & child health

Older people do not fit a conventional health model - treatment, cure and return to full physical vitality

Older life - phases of being well, ill and frail and dying - diversity in old age

Neglect of the care agenda
The “dependency” ratio?

Vietnam:
75% of men, 66% of women economically active at 60

India:
An estimated 1 in 3 men over 80 are still working

China:
38 million children are cared for by grandparents
Independent but vulnerable
Taking action

Practical help

• Basic pensions

• Access to health services

• Supporting older people’s associations
Older people – off the development agenda

• Medical model – older people defined by medical needs and search for “cure”

• Charity/welfare model – older people as recipients of social and economic support

• Towards a social model – the problem of social, cultural and economic constraints
A voice for older people

- Going beyond “vulnerable groups”
- The rights agenda – a convention for older people?
- Older people speaking for themselves where they can...
- ...and adequately represented where they cannot
- What can we learn from the disability movement?
Older and less able?