

## **ANNEX III: PRESENTATIONS**

Libor Stloukal:

**The FAO perspective on rural ageing.**

Linley Chiwona-Karltun:

**Ageing and nutritional issues.**

John Kadzandira:

**Rural ageing and livelihood challenges: findings from FAO study conducted in rural areas of Zomba District, Malawi.**

Zifa Kazeze:

**Social protection and ageing in Malawi.**

Harry Mwamlima:

**Social cash transfers in Malawi: from pilot to scaling up.**

Libor Stloukal:

**Where do we stand in international action on ageing?**





# The FAO Perspective on Rural Ageing: Challenges and Opportunities

**Libor Stloukal**  
FAO, Rome

FAO/BSF Meeting on Ageing  
Lilongwe, 28-29 November 2007



## Outline of the presentation

- 1) demographic determinants and consequences of global population ageing
- 2) basic facts and forecasts about population ageing in Malawi
- 3) challenges of population ageing in Malawi
- 4) why is rural population ageing specific?
- 5) population ageing as an opportunity

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## Background: the big picture

- o Worldwide, the age structure of the human population is changing dramatically – probably irreversibly.
- o Many developing countries in the midst of the demographic change are experiencing rapid shifts in the numbers of older persons.
- o The changing population age structure is becoming a major concern and the focus of heated political debate, as Governments struggle to address the growth of ageing-related issues and expenditures.
- o The changing age structure directly affects policies on: employment, poverty reduction, health care, housing and social protection, for example.

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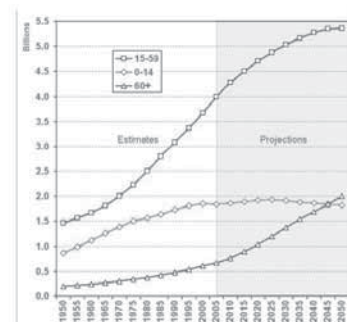
## Demographic determinants of ageing

demographic transition involves 3 stages:

1. increased survival of young children ~ proportion of children rises ~ rejuvenation of the age structure
2. fertility reduction ~ proportion of children starts declining ~ proportion of working-age adults rises
3. after lengthy periods of fertility and mortality declines, proportions of both children and working-age start to decline ~ the proportion of older persons starts to rise

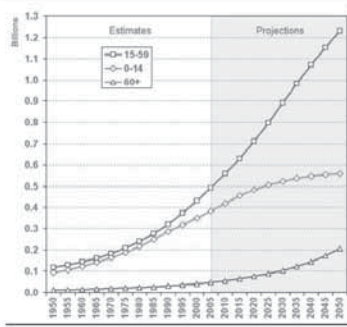
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## World population by age groups: 1950-2050



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## Africa's population by age groups: 1950-2050



Africa stands out as the only major region in the world whose population is still relatively young and where the number of elderly, although increasing, will still be far below the number of children in 2050.

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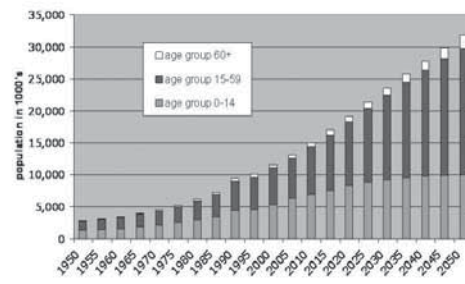
Legend: yellow = 0-9, orange = 10-19, red = 20-24, purple = 25-29, green = 30+, grey = no data  
Source: <http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/ageing/ageing2006chart.pdf>



Legend: yellow = 0-9, orange = 10-19, red = 20-24, purple = 25-29, green = 30+, grey = no data

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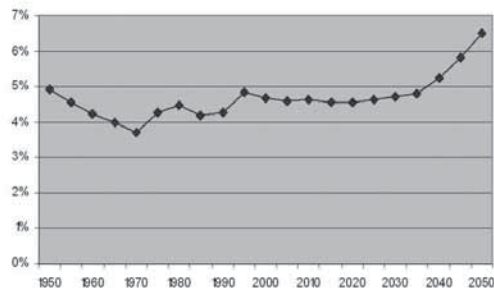
## Population of Malawi by age groups, 1950-2050



Source: World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision <http://esa.un.org/unpp>

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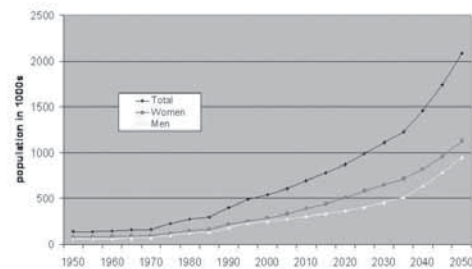
## Percentage of population aged 60+



Source: World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision <http://esa.un.org/unpp>

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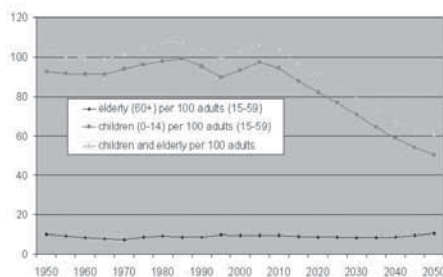
## Absolute numbers of population aged 60+



Source: World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision <http://esa.un.org/unpp>

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## Trends in "dependency" ratios

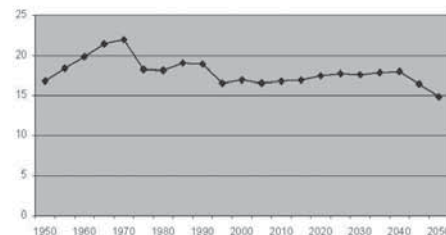


Source: World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision <http://esa.un.org/unpp>

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## Potential support ratio (population 15-64 / population 65+)

- an index of the support-base for the elderly
- assumes that the working population (15-64) provides direct or indirect support to the non-working dependent population (65+)



Source: World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision <http://esa.un.org/unpp>

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## So why should we be concerned about ageing?

- multi-dimensional nature of ageing
  - ageing of individuals
  - ageing of families and households
  - ageing of populations and sub-populations:
    - labour force, geographic regions, the elderly...
- ageing has consequences on:
  - family, economy, education, health, environment, culture, value systems, social relations...
- the situation of older persons is changing because of:
  - demographic change
  - social change = modernization and development
  - the impact of HIV and AIDS

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## Expected demographic change

### Malawi's elderly population (in thousands)

Year	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
Population 60+	545	696	876	1110	1461	2085
Population 65+	351	455	591	764	955	1387
Population 80+	38	55	80	115	154	211

### Feminization of Malawi's elderly population

Year	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
% of women in the 80+ age group	57.9	60.0	61.3	63.5	66.9	65.9

Source: World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision <http://esa.un.org/unpp>

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## Modernization and development

### some relevant trends:

- weakening of traditional care systems
- improvements in formal education, leading to greater independence and autonomy of young adults
- growth in salaried income and growing consumerism among younger cohorts
- reduction in subsistence agriculture
- reduced valuation of traditional skills
- reduced use of local indigenous languages
- inter-generational technology divide

### but perhaps we also need to add:

- rising economic hardship, leading to growing incapacity on the part of the younger generation

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## The impact of HIV/AIDS: 4 dimensions

- RESPONSIBILITIES: increased responsibilities of caring for orphans and other family members (incl. in ensuring adherence to ARV regimes)
- ECONOMIC IMPACT: reduced ability to earn income, loss of financial and social support from children
- HEALTH IMPACT: physical demands, emotional strain, exposure to infections adversely affect older people's health
- EMOTIONAL IMPACT: many experience emotional suffering and a sense of loss: of social status, of belonging to society, of control over their (and family) destiny

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## The importance of nutrition

### Good nutrition is essential in old age:

- ageing inevitably weakens the immune system, slows metabolism, reduces muscle mass
- insufficient calories, lack of protein and micronutrients increase the risk of infectious and other acute diseases
- undernourishment also increases risk of falls and slows recovery after sickness
- even small micronutrient deficiencies can lead to declines in cognitive ability
- weight loss is associated with reduction in functional ability and increased need for caregiving

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## The importance of rural ageing

### ○ in most countries, ageing is pre-dominantly a rural phenomenon

- out-migration of younger adults
- return migration of urban retirees
- age-specific impact of HIV/AIDS mortality
- exodus of younger adults due to conflict or natural disaster or climate change



### ○ the importance of rural ageing will accelerate in future

- key driver: shift away from agriculture to more diversified, urban-oriented livelihoods

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## Ageing in rural areas

- older people are a diverse part of rural communities
  - key contributors (child care, conflict resolution, livelihood support)
  - they are a diverse group with range of needs and wants
  - most are dependent on agriculture for day-to-day survival
  - most have extremely limited access to services
  - some are very poor and isolated/excluded
- the institutional context matters:
  - existing development paradigms often see agriculture as a "low profile" sector
  - many rural areas typified by: weak economic performance and limited institutional capacity to promote development
  - strong reliance on family solidarity – but rural families are changing in due to out-migration and urbanization, HIV/AIDS, cultural change, etc.
  - scarcity of "best practice" examples on managing rural population change

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## How ageing affects agriculture

- effects are co-determined by:
  - bio-physical environment, social organization, household dynamics, population density, economies of scale, technology, infrastructure & services, policy context
- in some settings, ageing can add to existing problems
  - reduced labour availability
  - shift to less labour-demanding farming practices
  - livelihoods predominantly subsistence-oriented
  - insufficient protection of natural resources (e.g. land) and rural infrastructure
  - increased gender- and age inequality

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## Challenges faced by rural elderly

- **development tends to reduce the value of agricultural assets, skills and products**
  - this diminishes the status, well-being and power of rural elderly
- **frail elderly are often less valued and respected**
  - they often receive poor, sometimes death-hastening treatment
- **elderly have reduced capacity to adapt to changes & shocks**
  - when things go bad, they are often unable to cope
  - when things go well, they are often unable to take advantage
- **vulnerability in old age is closely associated with:**
  - being a woman
  - lack of savings and assets
  - lack of education
  - poor health and/or disability
  - living in an HIV/AIDS-affected household
  - unavailability of kin
  - residence in remote rural area

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## Positive aspects of population ageing

- demographically, ageing is the outcome of planned parenthood, improved child survival, and increasing longevity of adults
  - it's a major success story!
- the elderly contribute in many ways:
  - income-earners, providers of care & accommodation
  - socio-cultural functions within community
  - sources of knowledge, guardians of traditions
- ageing can also open up new opportunities, such as:
  - elderly as knowledge banks
  - return migration of elderly rich in capital and expertise
  - greater scope for intergenerational relationships (e.g. grandparent-grandchild)

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## What determines quality of life in old age?

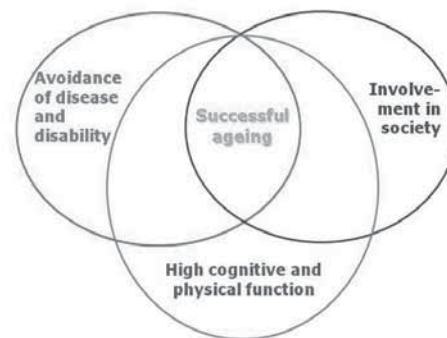
Gerontologists have developed many theories of "good" ageing:

- productive ageing = ability to contribute
- healthy ageing = ability to remain fit
- successful ageing = ability to maximize desired outcomes, minimize undesired ones

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## Determinants of successful ageing

Adapted from Rowe and Kahn, 1997



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