

## **Jakarta Statement on Healthy Ageing**

Ageing is currently the most important demographic trend worldwide. Further ageing of societies in developed countries is now accompanied by unprecedentedly rapid ageing of populations in developing countries.

The challenges and opportunities for society are multiple and universal. Investments for health throughout life ensure that individuals reach old age enjoying increasing levels of health. This life-course perspective is essential. Health in old age depends on investment in health from childhood. Further major benefits are gained from interventions in adult life - to include those targeting individuals already in old age.

There is a clear evidence that health promotion interventions in relation to ageing work. Data from a number of countries indicate that older people are enjoying better physical and mental health leading to improved social well-being.

A "healthy ageing" initiative has been launched under WHO leadership. It promotes a cycle of activities: the strengthening of information bases; dissemination of information; advocacy; informed research; training; and policy development. It encourages community-based and inter-generational activities. It emphasizes gender and ethical issues.

Successful projects depend on multi-sectoral involvement. The participation of older people themselves as active players and role models, reinvesting in health as they continue to age, greatly strengthens the process. Firm partnerships are needed with many other agencies and sectors - NGOs, governments, educational bodies, the media and the private sector. Projects should be evaluated to identify models of good practice. Only through evidence of effectiveness will decision-makers be convinced and policy development influenced.

Health is the building block which enables individuals to continue to contribute to society. "Healthy older people are a resource for their families, their communities and the economy" (Brasilia Declaration on Ageing, WHO, July 1996).