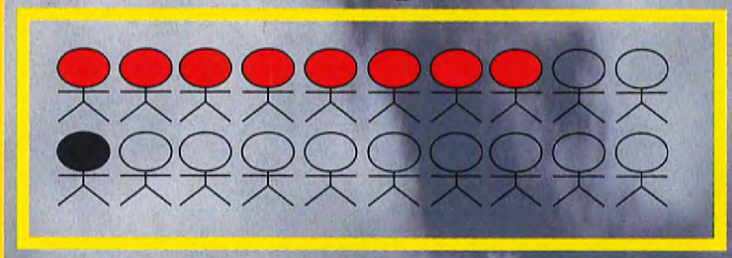
Global Village of Elders;

A Window into our Common Destiny

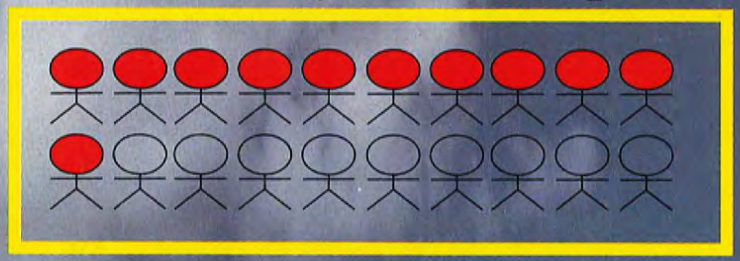
Total World Population



8 live in China & India

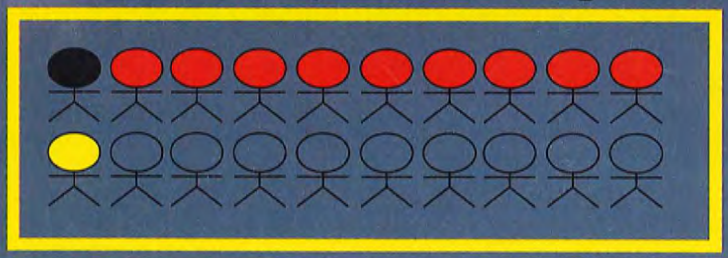
1 lives in the United States

Total Elderly World Population (65+)



11 Live in Developing Countires

Total Elderly World Population (65+)



1 lives in the United States,
9 live in Asia &
1 lives in Latin America

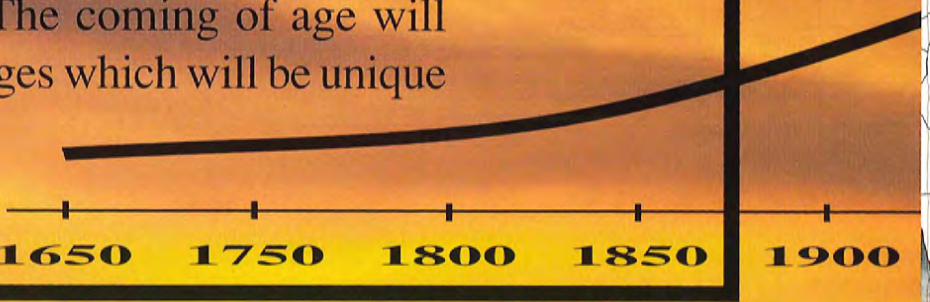
Prepared for the 1995 White House Conference on Aging

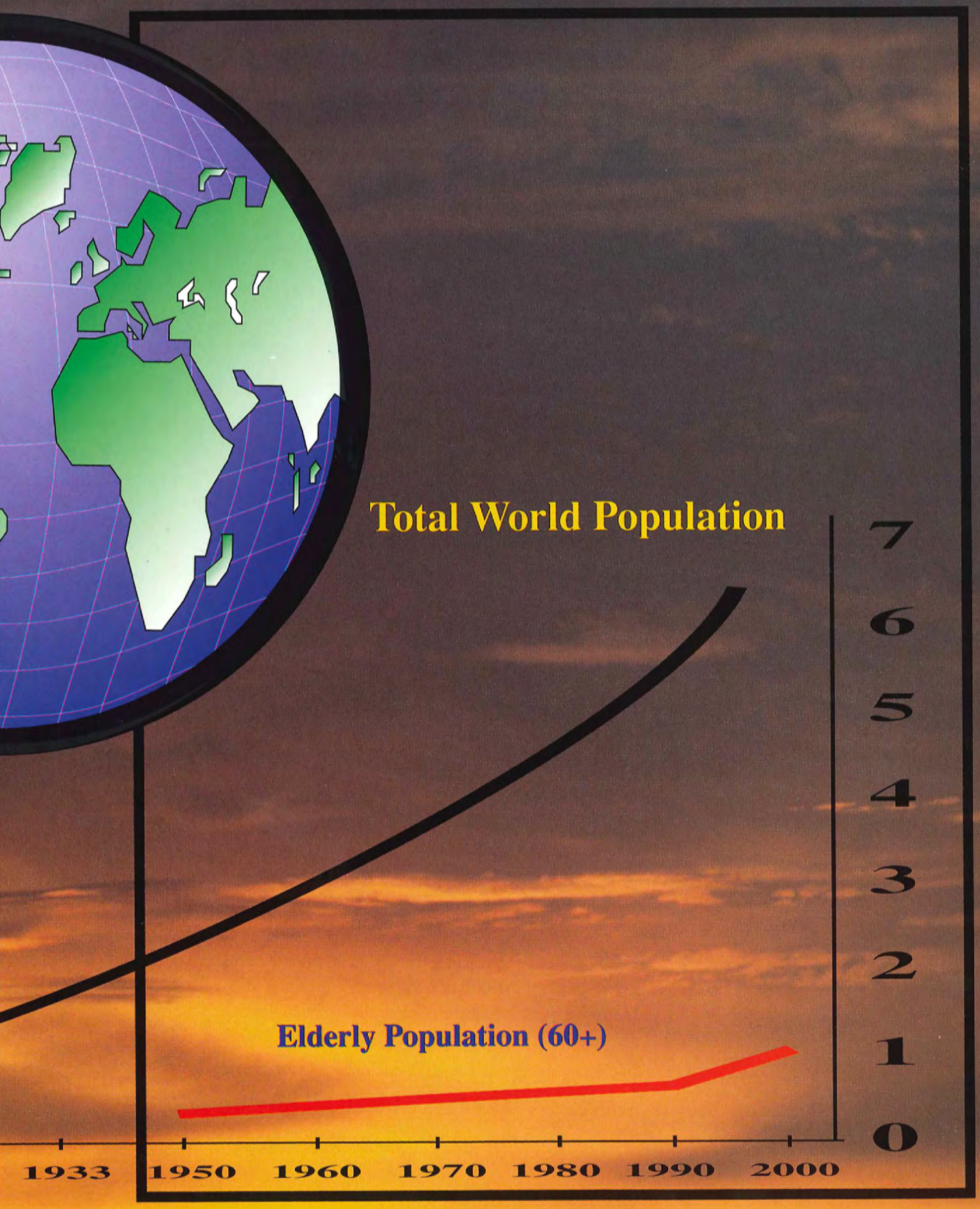
our graying planet

From the dawn of time populations started to age. However, elderly populations, 60 years and over, are a recent phenomenon in our path through history. Accurate estimates of populations are a recent development, although we are still estimating populations with some margin of error.

If we look at historical data to estimate how global populations have increased through time, we will find that our graying planet has only recently began to age. The coming of age will bring with it new challenges which will be unique for our planet

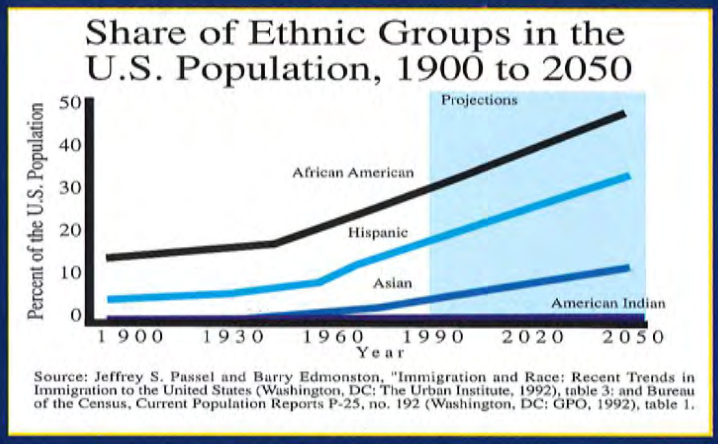
.



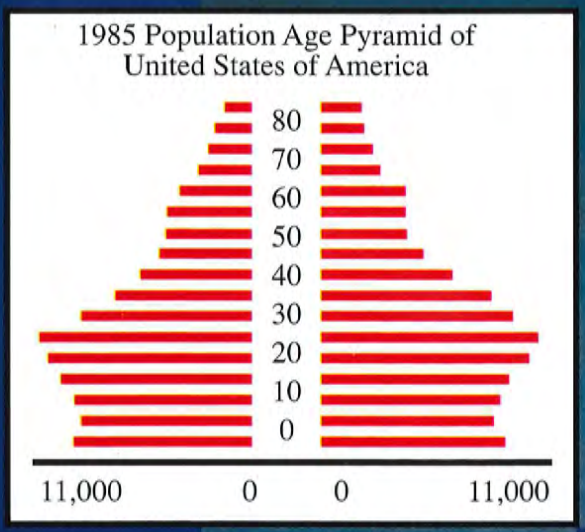

Total World Population
Elderly Population (60+)
in thousand millions
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
1933
1950
1960
1970
1980
1990
2000
ear

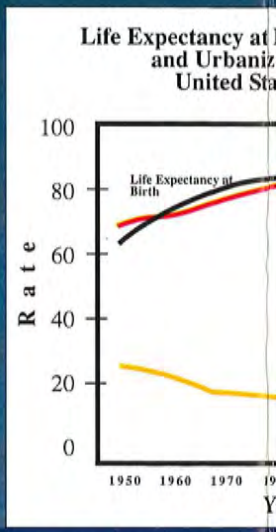
Ethn

The United States of America is a new country with an old population, where the diversity of its population acts as a microcosm of our global village. This relationship that the U.S. has with its global neighbors is best exemplified by the makeup of our population. The U.S. is a melting pot of cultures and races. Projections for the future also indicate that this diversity within the U.S. population will increase, so that after the year 2010 the non-hispanic white population will comprise a minority. We are aptly placed therefore to relate to the rest of our global neighbors.



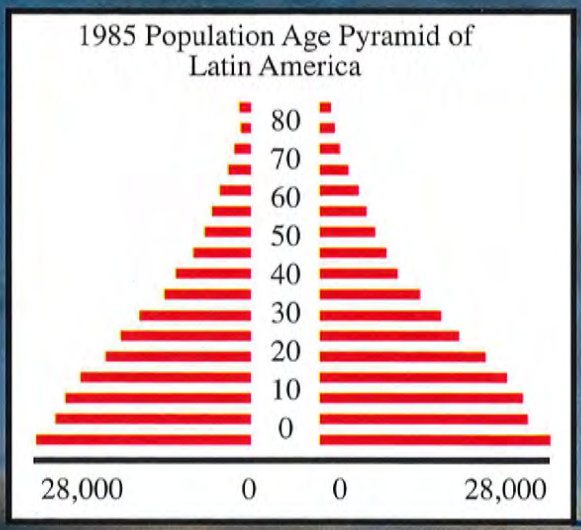
Source: Jeffrey S. Passel and Barry Edmonston, "Immigration and Race: Recent Trends in Immigration to the United States (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, 1992), table 3: and Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports P-25, no. 192 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1992), table 1.





With this diversity of cultures and races, we will also be seeing a change in the age composition of our country. Ethnic groups within the U.S. have elderly populations which comprise a smaller proportion of their total population than for the general U.S. population. Our ethnic groups showed a higher level of Crude Birth Rate and also a higher mortality at older age groups. As such, these demographics relate to our neighbors.

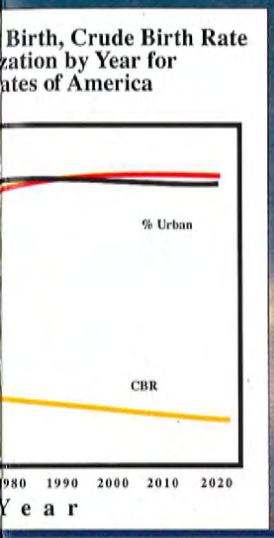
Source: Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports P-25, no. 1092 (washington, D.C.: GPO, 1992) table 2

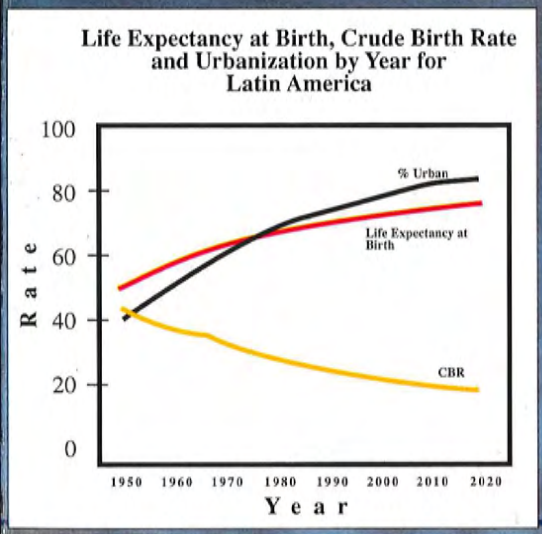


Less Developed Regions.

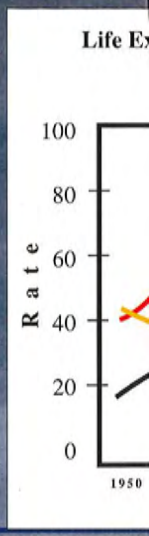
The three unique regions selected here also have marked similarities in their population structure. Primarily, they all have young populations, with high fertility and high mortality. The sharper the incline, the younger the population, with the top of the pyramid representing elderly populations. The continent of Africa, in this example, has the youngest population. With a proportion of the elderly (65 years and over) constituting 6% of the general population, Africa will not likely have an elderly population (10% elderly) within the next fifty years.

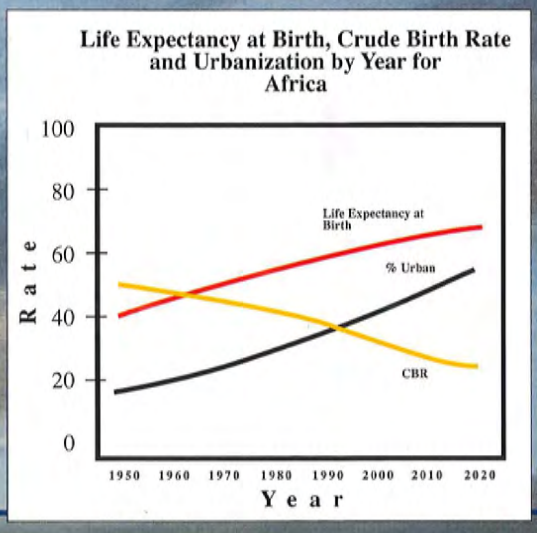
ic Diversity in the United S

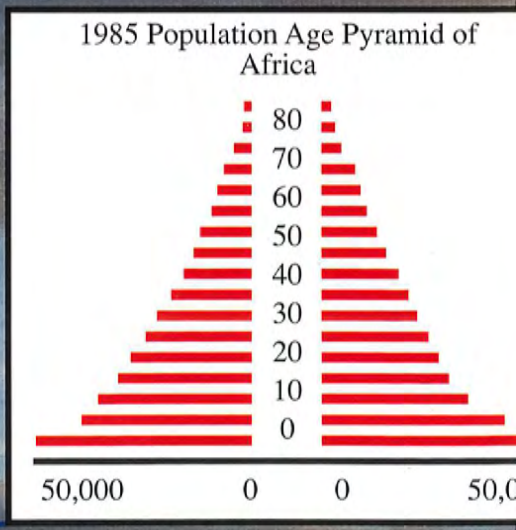




States and of its Global Nei

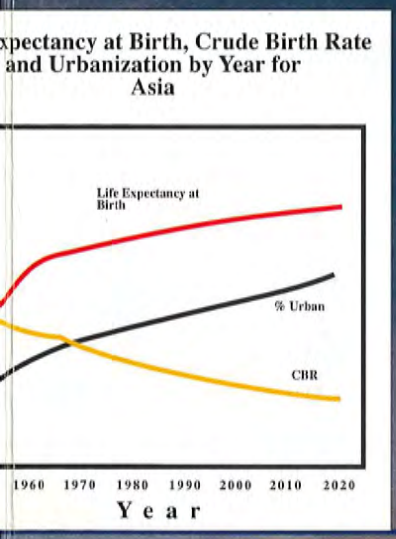


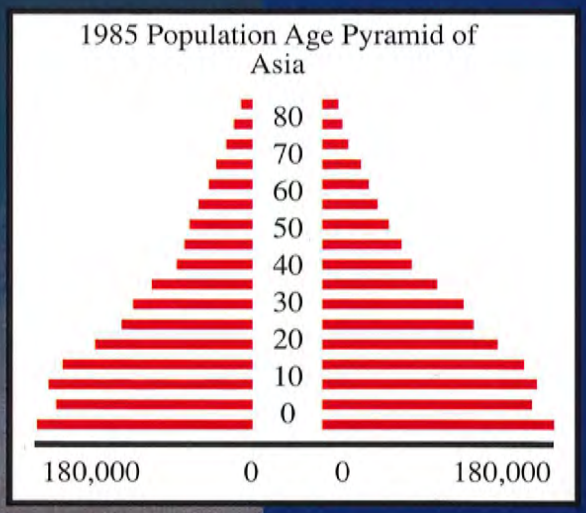




ghbors

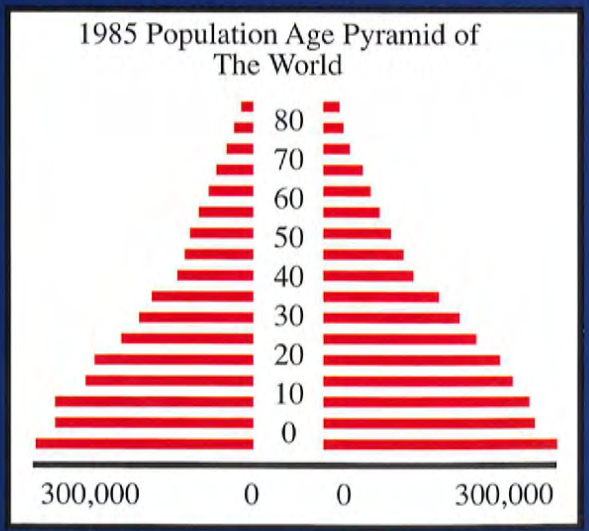
Although Asia , like Africa, also has a low proportion of its population over the age of 65 years (7.7%), because of the dramatic and unique decline in the birth rate in the last three decades (primarily due to China's family planning policy), the elderly proportion of the population will increase to 15% by 2020. Such an increase is unqiue in the history of the world, not only because of the speed of this transition but also because of the magnitude of this population. This shift in the age structure will have significant repercussions on our global village of elders.





For other regions the speed of the aging of their populations is not the primary distinguishing feature. For example, in Latin America , with an elderly proportion of 7.8% of the total population the main accelerated change is the proportion of the population living in urban areas. By 2020 urbanites are projected to constitute more than 80% of the population. The World Health Organization estimates that half of the urban population in less developed regions live in slums.

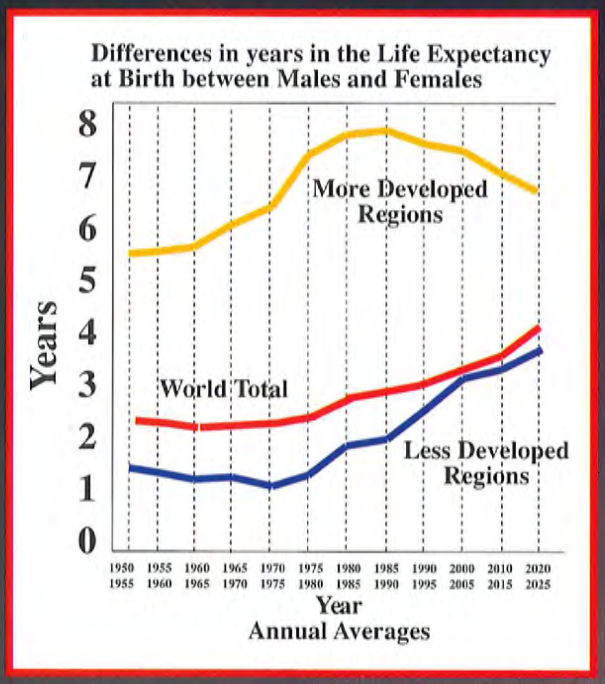
Our shared destiny within this global village dictates the importance of planning for our elderly populations. Social Security programs are one way of planning to meet the increasing demands from these emerging elderly populations. In 1987, the U.S. Social Security Department estimated that over 130 countries reported an "old-age, invalidity and survivors" program. Although coverage from these programs has been increasing to include larger portions our population, most elderly people in the world have no form of social or income security apart from their capacity to be gainfully employed.



we share a common destiny

Elderly Women; Increasing age, increasing presence

In all countries in the world, women live longer than men. This phenomenon accounts for the fact that women form the largest group within our global elderly village. The life expectancy at birth for women is, on average, 3 to 6 years higher than that of men. Common expectation has been that this difference will narrow with time, to a point where they will converge. However, from available data and projections, this expectation of convergence is not predicted to occur within the foreseeable future, even if the gap will narrow within more developed regions of the world, the opposite is true for less developed regions. For example in India, by 2025, the number of women aged 80 years and over will increase by 502%, whereas for men in the same age group the increase will be 394%. Indonesia will show one of the highest growth of 80+ women with an increase of 530%. Since women also tend to marry men of a younger age, this social and cultural phenomenon increases the likelihood that women will become widowed in their advanced ages. These events together determine that widowed women will continue to constitute an increasing presence within our global village of elders.



This brochure has been produced by the **American Association for International Aging (AAIA)** in cooperation with;

The American Society on Aging
The Gerontological Society of America
the National Council on the Aging
the United States Agency for International Development and AAIA's Development Education for Retired Americans Program

Technical support for the production of this brochure was provided by **The University of New Mexico Center on Aging** in Albuquerque, New Mexico and the **Population Reference Bureau, Inc. Washington, D.C.**

Sources of data: Front Page:Bureau of the Census, Statistical Brief, September 1992.
Our Graying Planet, 1650 to 1933 from A.M. Carr-Saunders (1937),"World Population: Past Growth and Present Trends",Oxford University Press; 1950 to 2000 (elderly and total population) United Nations (1989),"Global Estimates and Projections, 1988". Department of International Economic and Social Affairs. ST/ESA/SER.A/106. New York.
Age Pyramids and Life Expectancy at Birth, Crude Birth Rate and Urbanization from: N.Keyfitz & W.Flieger (1990),"World Population Growth and Aging: Demographic trends in the late twentieth century". University of Chicago Press. Social Security Programs from: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (1989),"Social Security Programs Throughout the World-1987". Research Report #61.
Urbanization and slums from: Bureau of the Census, K Kinsella, (1992),"Population and Health Transitions". International Population Reports P95/92-2.
Elderly Women, Life Expectancy differentials from: N.Keyfitz & W.Flieger (1990),"World Population Growth and Aging: Demographic trends in the late twentieth century". University of Chicago Press.
Increase in the 80+ age group for women from: P. Paillat (1992). "Ageing within Ageing". Bold, Vol.2, No.4.

AAIA/UNM Center on Aging, 1836 Lomas Blvd. Albuquerque. New Mexico. USA 87131-6086. USA
Design and brochure preparation by Helen K. Kerschner and Mario D. Garrett 1995