

# Ageing in Sri Lanka

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# Who is an Elderly ?

A person who has completed  
60 years of age is considered  
as an Elderly

# What is Ageing

- ▶ Is a biological process that starts from the date of conception and goes on until the death
- ▶ Is a global phenomenon
- ▶ Occurs due to changes in the physical psychological and functional arenas of an individual

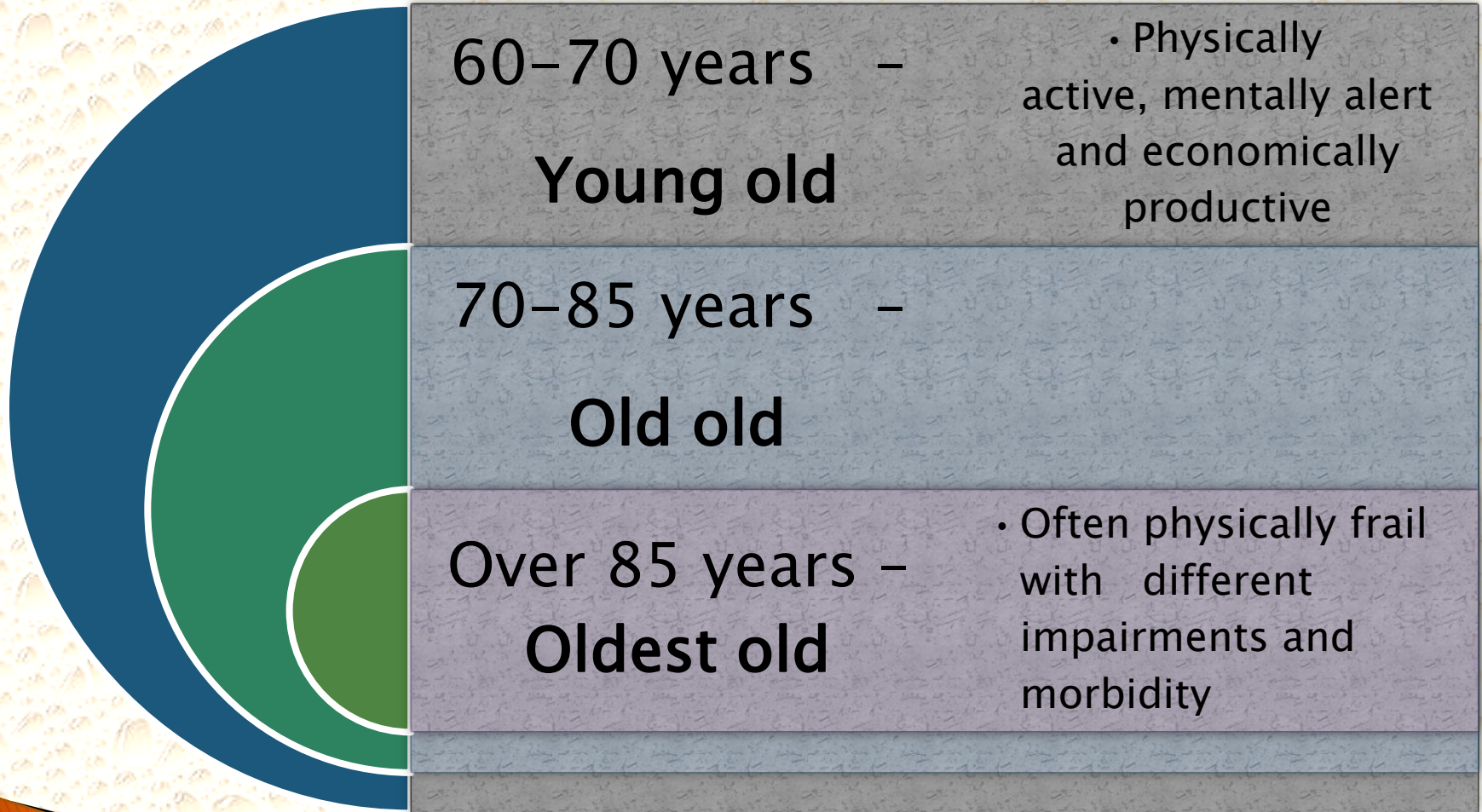
This process can not to be stopped or reversed

But quality can be altered

Quality of this process is highly associated with socio-cultural, economical and environmental factors

Interventions should be started as early as possible

# Elderly Population Can be Further Divided



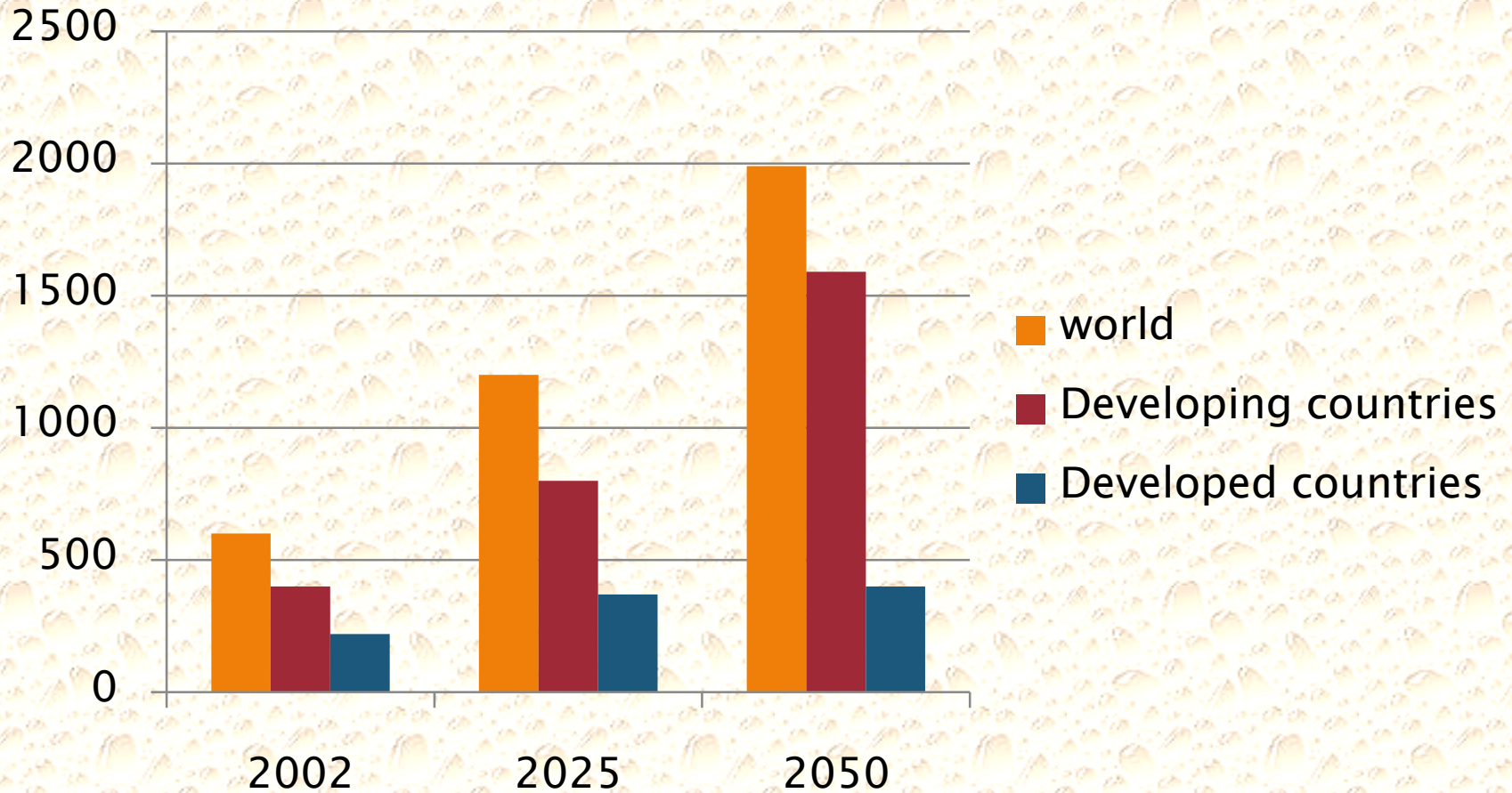
# ***Aged population of the World***

- ▶ Current–660 million
- ▶ By 2025–1200 million
- ▶ By 2050–1990 million

2/3 of them live in developing countries

- ▶ Population is rapidly ageing in countries like Japan, Singapore, Australia

# Number of People aged over 60 years



# Situation in the Asian Region

Total population 41 00 million

Elders—410 million (10%)

733 million in 2025

1.3 billion by 2050 (25%)

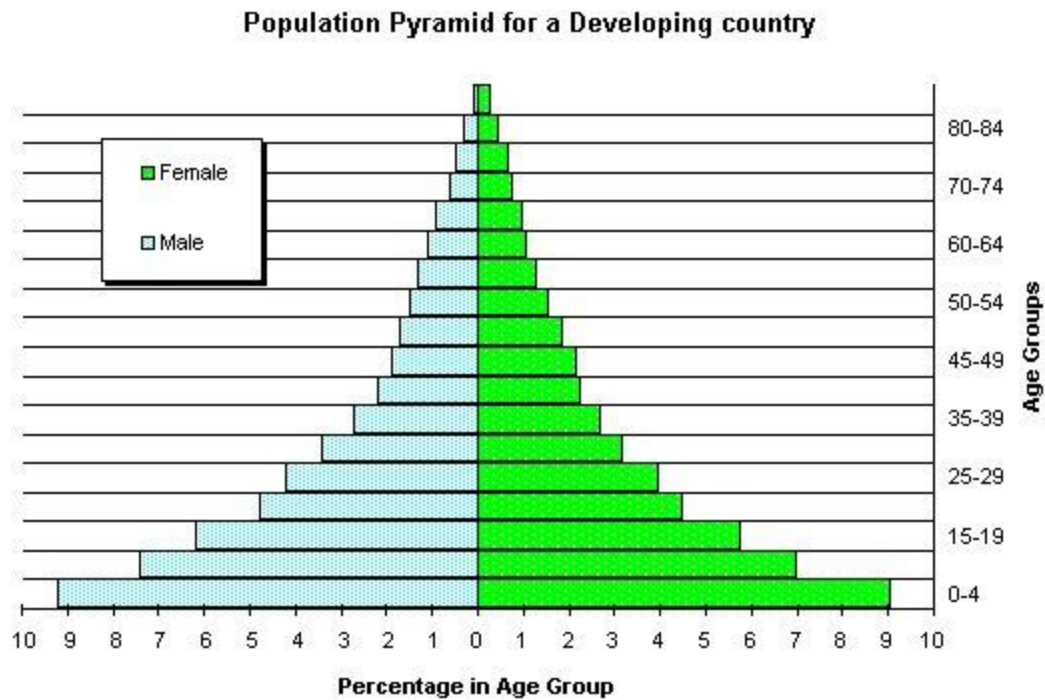
Older persons outnumbered children under  
15yrs by 2008



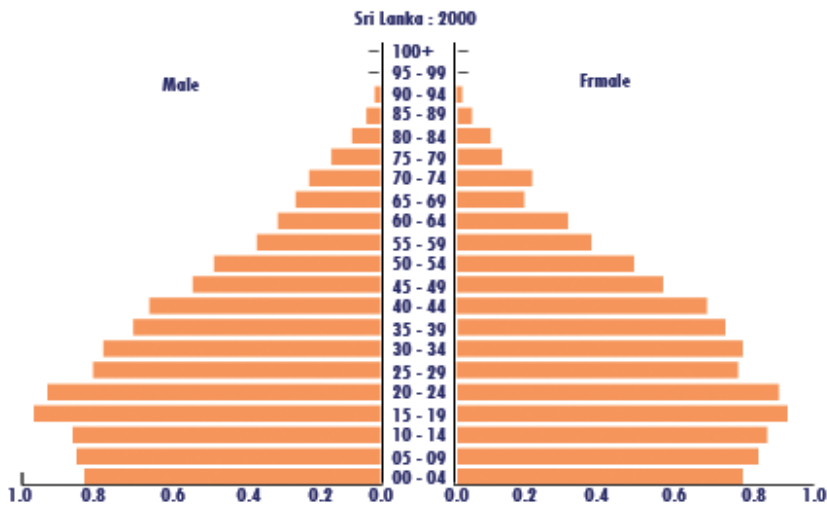
# Situation in Sri Lanka

- ▶ Total population –20million
- ▶ Population over 60 yrs
  - 1971 –6.3%
  - 2001 –9.2%
  - 2041 –24.8%
- ▶ Highest in SE Asia
- ▶ Third highest percentage in Asia following Japan and Singapore

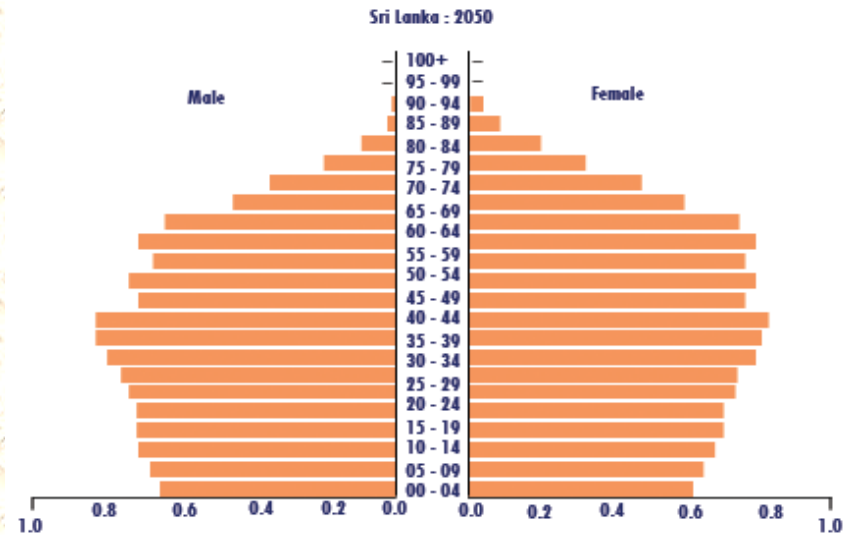
# The typical Age Pyramid



# Sri Lankan Age Pyramid



Today



By 20-25 years

# Challenges due to ageing

- ▶ Demands due to the Physical changes
- ▶ Care and services to address Mental changes
- ▶ Protection of rights and provide Social security

# Factors causing Physical changes

- ▶ Reduction in growth
- ▶ Reduction in repairing capacity
- ▶ Reduction in functions of the immune system
- ▶ Reduction in muscle mass
- ▶ Reduction in capacity to respond to stress
- ▶ Anatomical changes occur in the brain and The rest of the body

# Physical changes

- ▶ Chronic Diseases
  - ❖ Ischemic Heart Disease
  - ❖ Hypertension
  - ❖ Diabetes mellitus
  - ❖ Chronic obstructive airways disease
  - ❖ Degenerative diseases
- ▶ Cerebro-vascular accidents

- ▶ Vision and Hearing impairment
- ▶ Poor Nutrition
- ▶ Cancers
- ▶ Frailty – disability/ bed ridden
- ▶ Cosmetic Changes
- ▶ Limitation of Functional capacities

# Mental

- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Memory impairment – Dementia
  - Alzheimer's disease
- ▶ Loss of self Esteem
- ▶ Sense of burden to family and society
- ▶ Empty nest syndrome – feel lonely



# Social

- ▶ Financial dependency
- ▶ No social security
- ▶ Ownership of properties
- ▶ Housing
- ▶ Non availability of services designed for their needs
- ▶ Food security
- ▶ Exploitation/Abuse

Due to rapid increase of Non Communicable Diseases along with the Demographic shift alteration of the disease pattern has taken place

Considering all these factors existing health facilities should be designed to meet the demands of elderly

# How to face these Challenges

- ▶ Multi sectoral approach
- ▶ Health services, Social Services and Media should play a key role
- ▶ Prioritize the issue
- ▶ Sufficient resource allocation

# Health services available for Elders

# Preventive

- ▶ Elderly care is integrated to the public health care services as a priority
- ▶ Grass root level health care providers (Mid wife, PHI) provide services at that level (establishment of day centers, screening clinics, Health education, etc.....)
- ▶ Provincial, District and Regional level advocacy and awareness programmes

- ▶ Multi sectoral co-ordination in the view of providing better services
- ▶ Co-ordination with partners (private sector, donors, NGO's, INGO's)
- ▶ Health education in relation to preparation for the retirement
- ▶ Include elderly care in the curriculum of the basic training of health persons
- ▶ Interventions to improve awareness and social values among school children
- ▶ Provide technical guidelines to the partners

# Curative

- ▶ It is identified as a priority area in the Health Master Plan
- ▶ The process of conversion of all health institutions to elderly friendly was started
- ▶ Special medical clinics for elders in primary health care institutions and dental care services where there are graduated medical officers were established

- ▶ Provision of free healthcare and advanced technology such as CABG and other cardiac surgeries, kidney transplant, joint replacement, Neurological interventions, etc...
- ▶ Special Eye camps for Prevention of Blindness(Cataract, Glucoma)
- ▶ Provision of out reach medical clinics
- ▶ Stream line Mental Health care services improving accessibility and quality
- ▶ Initiatives to improve Rehabilitation programme
- ▶ Establishment of long stay hospitals



# Economical Challenges

- ▶ High cost for the health care services for elders Extra budgetary allocations should be identified
- ▶ Make change of existing services as elder friendly
- ▶ Make use of knowledge, skills and experiences of this group for development of the country

# What should be the Responsibility of Media

- ▶ Create awareness giving emphasis to Active Ageing
- ▶ Advocate policy makers
- ▶ Make society knowledgeable about how to care for elders
- ▶ Make general public aware about the national policies, Acts and Laws which protect interests of elders
- ▶ Make available a special printing media dedicated for elders

# Areas to be Developed

- ▶ Implementation of government Policies, Laws and Acts in an effective way
- ▶ Work more effectively on advocacy and awareness
- ▶ Improve specialized Geriatrics healthcare services
- ▶ Sensitization of Healthcare providers
- ▶ Establishment of community based Elderly care services
- ▶ Research on Elders

- ▶ More resource allocation
- ▶ Human resource development for elderly care
- ▶ Design special nutritional programme for elders
- ▶ Development of management information system
- ▶ Gender equity
- ▶ Give more emphasis to “Mahinda Chinthana” and respect senior citizens.

THANK YOU