



INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH
HARVEY A. FRIEDMAN CENTER FOR AGING

The Imperative for a Productive Ageing Perspective

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Productive aging: International meetings

2009, Shandong University (Chinese Academy
of Social Sciences and university partners)
2011, Peking University (Tin Foundation and
university partners)
2012, National Taiwan University, Social Policy
Research Center

Today—4th meeting on Productive Aging

Demographic Revolution: World

(a) Today



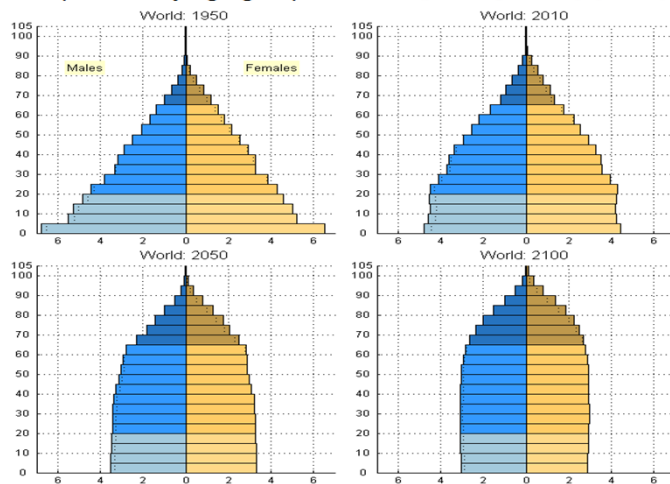
(b) 2050



■ > 20% of population over age 65

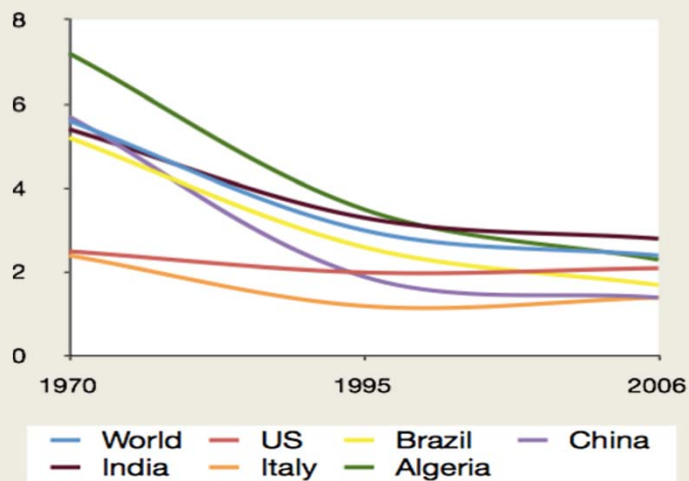
World: Population Pyramids 1950-2100

Population by age groups and sex (percentage of total population)



United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2011)

Decreasing Fertility Rates



World Fertility Report 2009, UN, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division.

Life Expectancy Increases

	1975	2000	2010
World	61.3	67.2	69.6
Japan	75.1	81.1	82.9
United States	72.6	76.6	78.2
Afghanistan	37.3	45.3	48.3
Hong Kong (SAR)	73.4	80.9	82.9
China	65.7	71.2	73.3

Source: The World Bank, Life expectancy at birth, total (years). 2011

Population Aging

Successes

- Increased longevity
- Delayed morbidity
- Higher education

Challenges

- Post-employment income support
- Health care
- Care needs of frail older adults

Age Drain

At the population level

- Bankrupt national budget
- Strain health care system
- Overburden younger population

At the individual level

- Dependency
- Depression
- Dementia

Another Reality: Age as Asset

Capacity of older adults is increasing

- ◆ Increasing number of healthy years after age 60
- ◆ Increasing level of education
- ◆ Older adults desire to use their later years in meaningful ways and to make contributions

This capacity is part of a solution to the demands of an older population.

Productive Engagement of Older Adults

Assumptions:

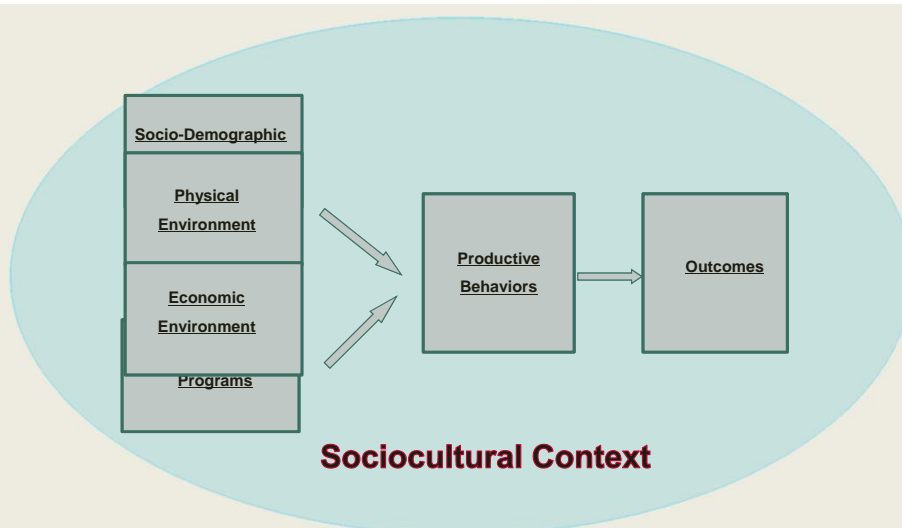
- Society can not afford “age drain” perspective.
- Productive engagement of older population is a necessity, not a luxury.

We must:

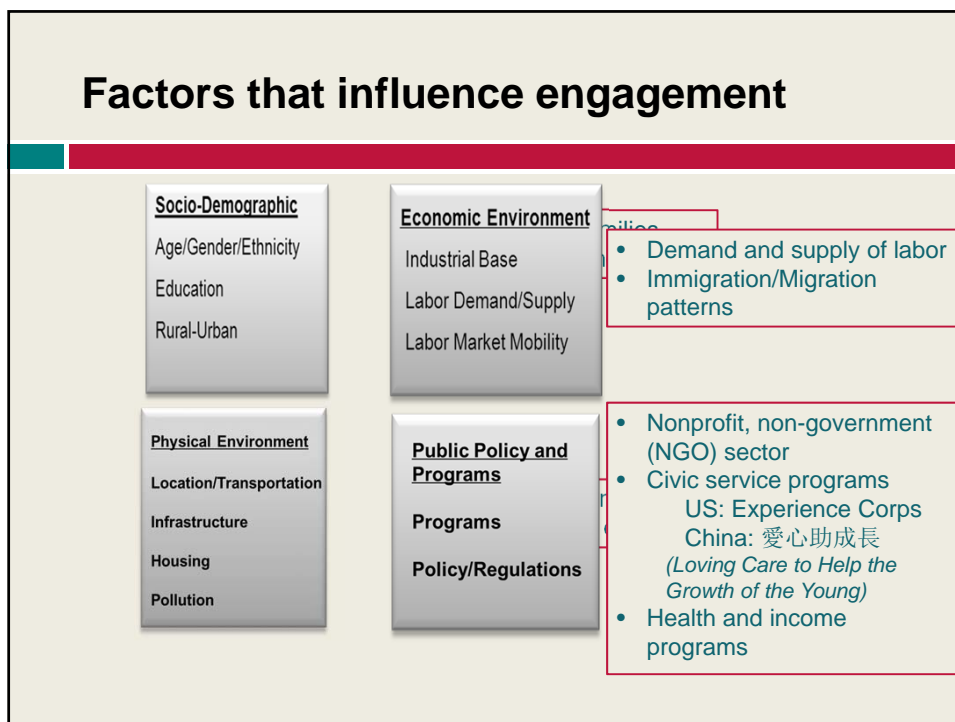
- think and act differently about being old.
- engage the human capital of older people in the face of population aging.

How do we achieve a productively engaged older population?

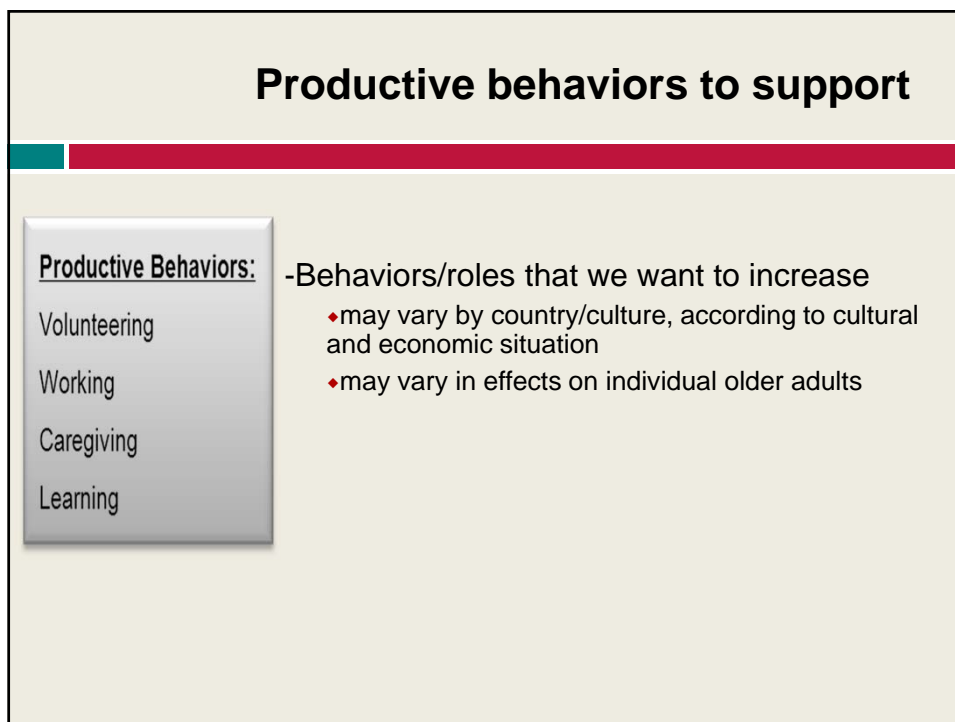
**Productive Engagement in Later Life:
Cross-Cultural Framework**



Factors that influence engagement



Productive behaviors to support



Potential outcomes: Effects at multiple levels

Multi-Dimensional:

Individuals

Families

Communities

Society

Individual older adults

- Health: physical and mental health
- Life satisfaction; self-worth

Families

- Caregiving/grandparenting
- Income contribution

Community

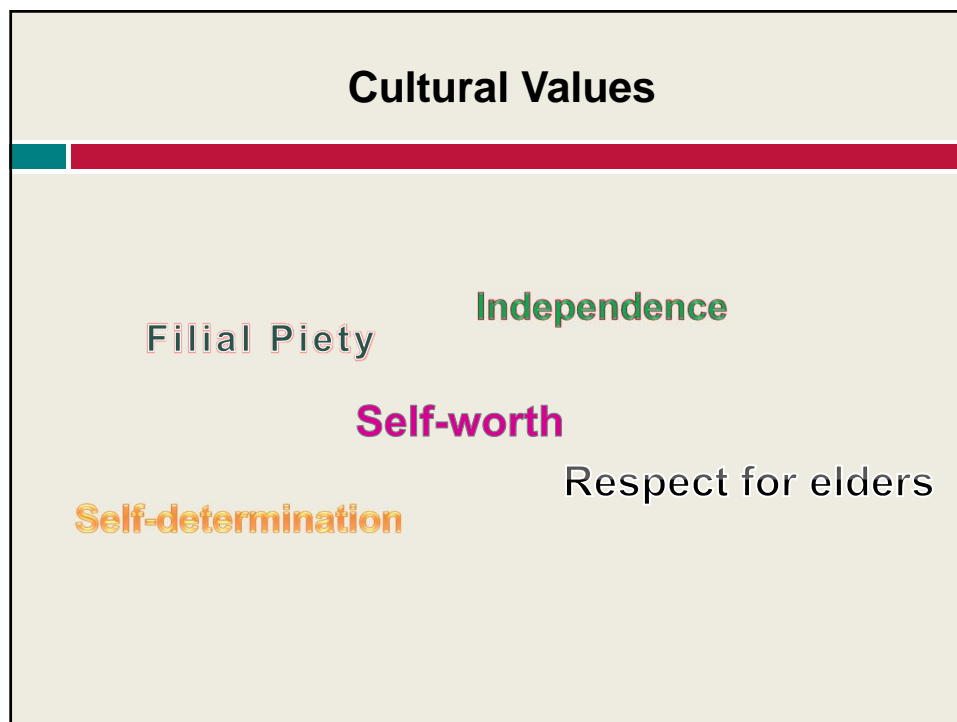
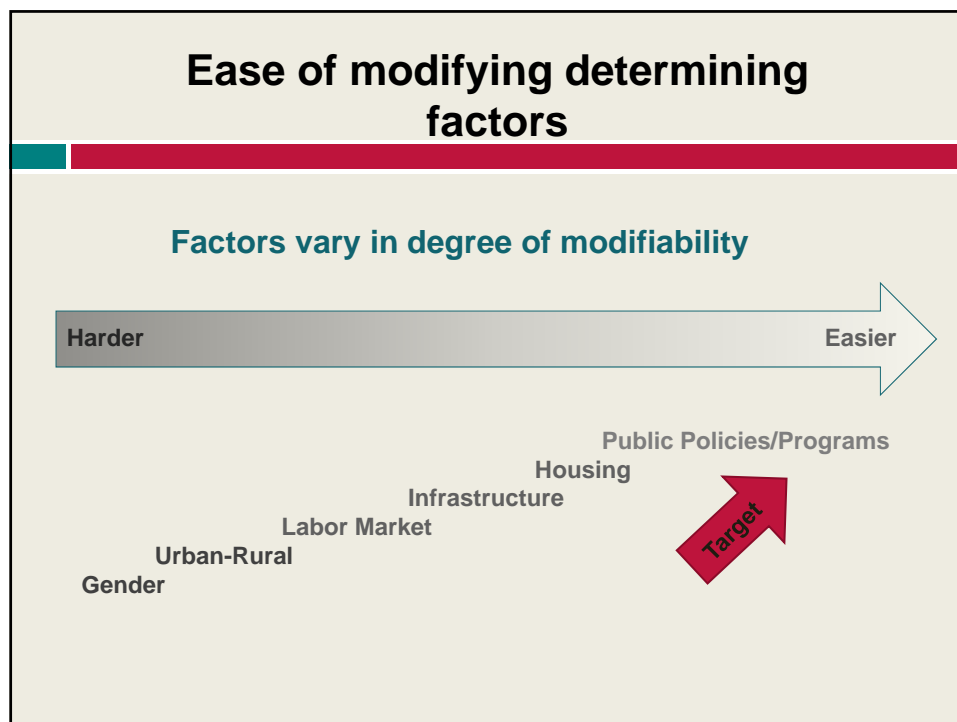
- Higher levels of social capital
- Experienced workers, volunteers, caregivers

Society

- Less reliance on public pension or health care system
- Positive intergenerational relationships

Big Questions

- How can productive engagement be maximized?
- What determining factors can we affect?
- What policies and programs are most effective?
- What level of engagement is best for society and for individuals?



Core Principles that Guide Productive Aging Policies and Programs

- Choice vs Coercion
- Opportunity vs Obligation
- Tapping growing human capital vs Exploiting older adults
- Intergenerationism vs intergenerational conflict
- Inclusion vs Elitism

Thank you!