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Ageing and Family in Asian Society: Future Roles of our Younger Generations

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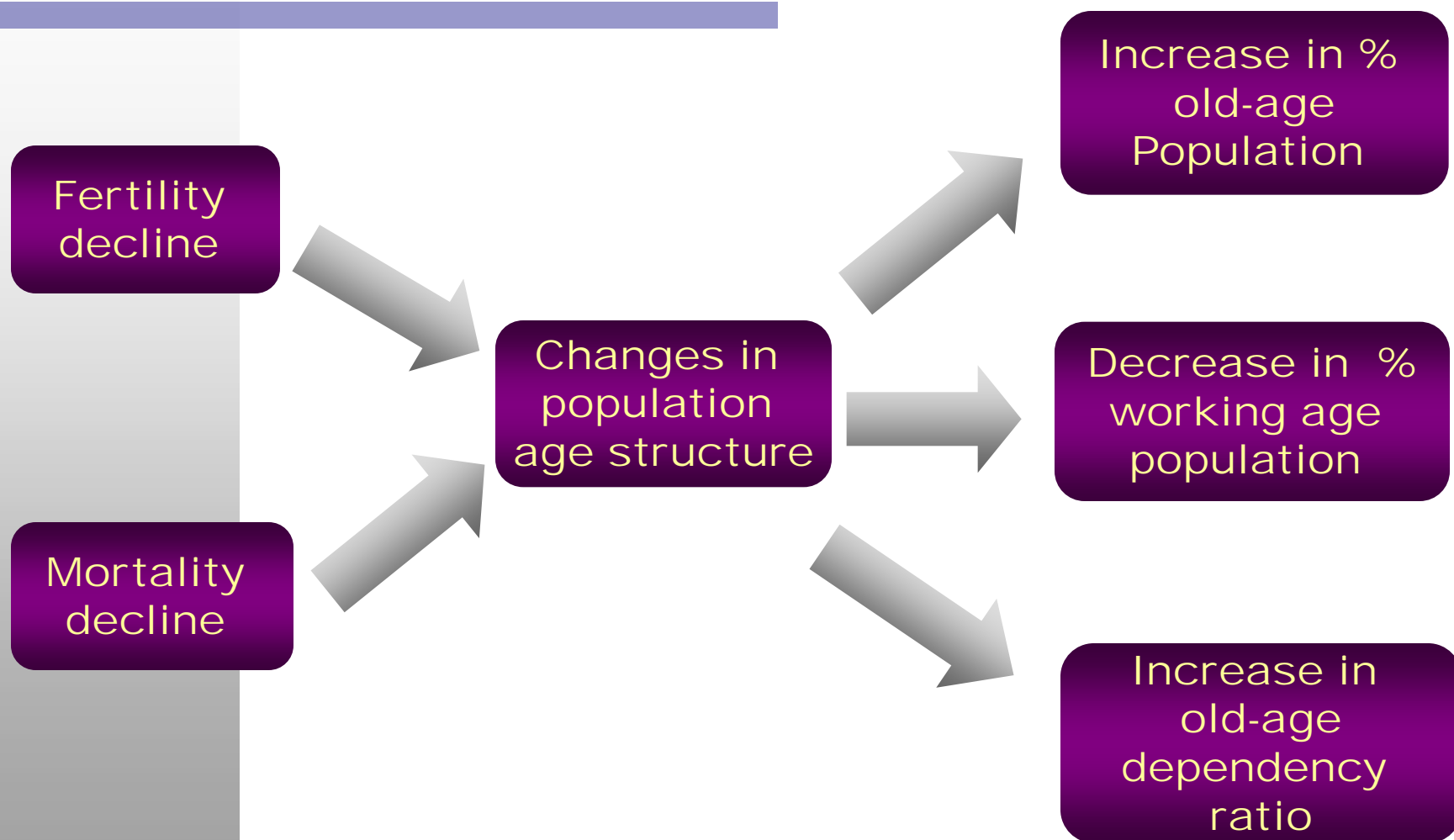
**Crossing Borders, Making Connections:
Service-Learning in Diverse Communities**

Longnan University 1-5 June 2009

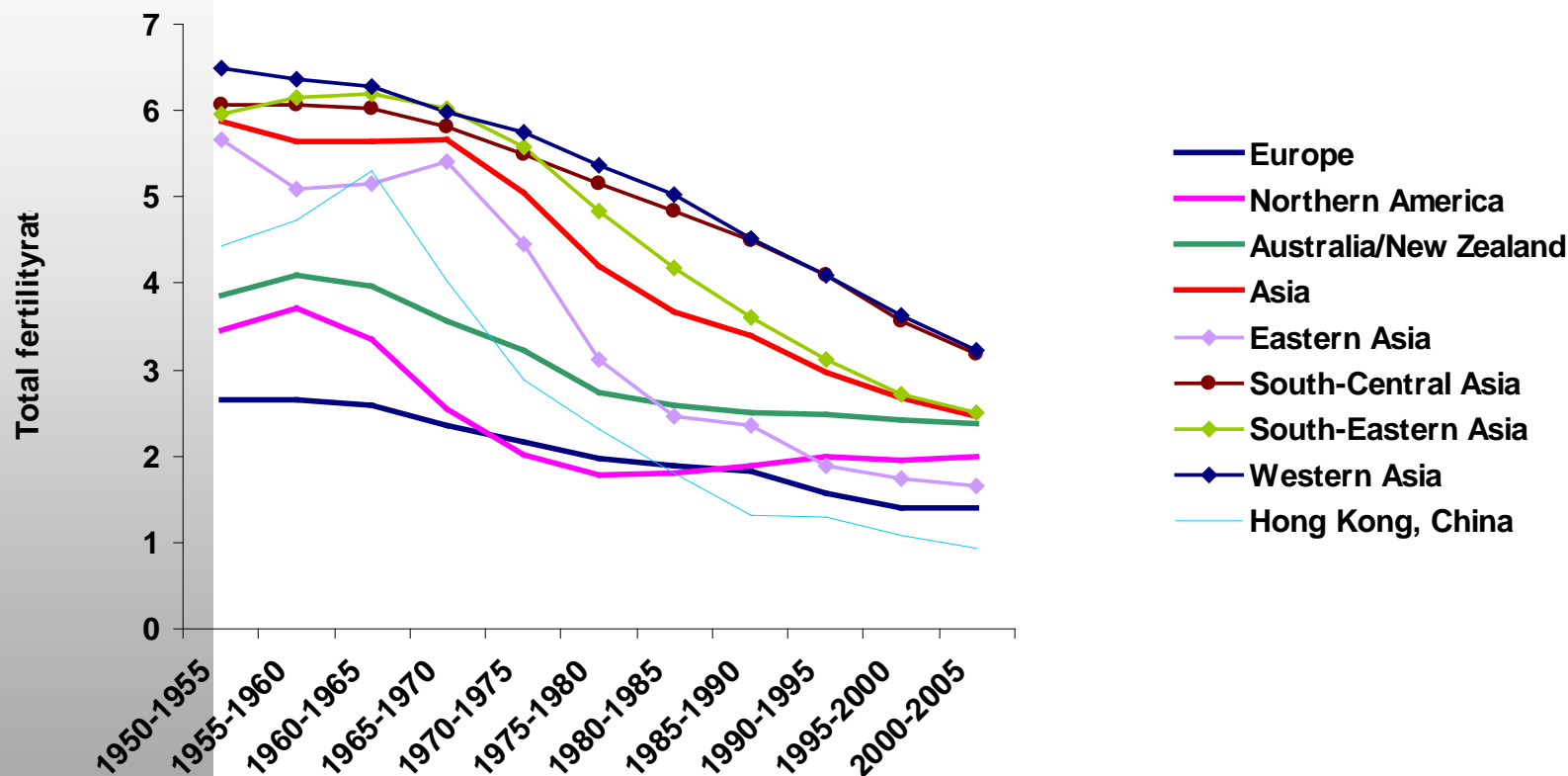
Outline

- Dynamics of population ageing
- Implications of population ageing
- Changing families in Asia
- Towards intergenerational solidarity
- UN and the issue of intergenerational solidarity
- Concluding remarks

Population Ageing as a Result of Changes in Demographic Dynamics

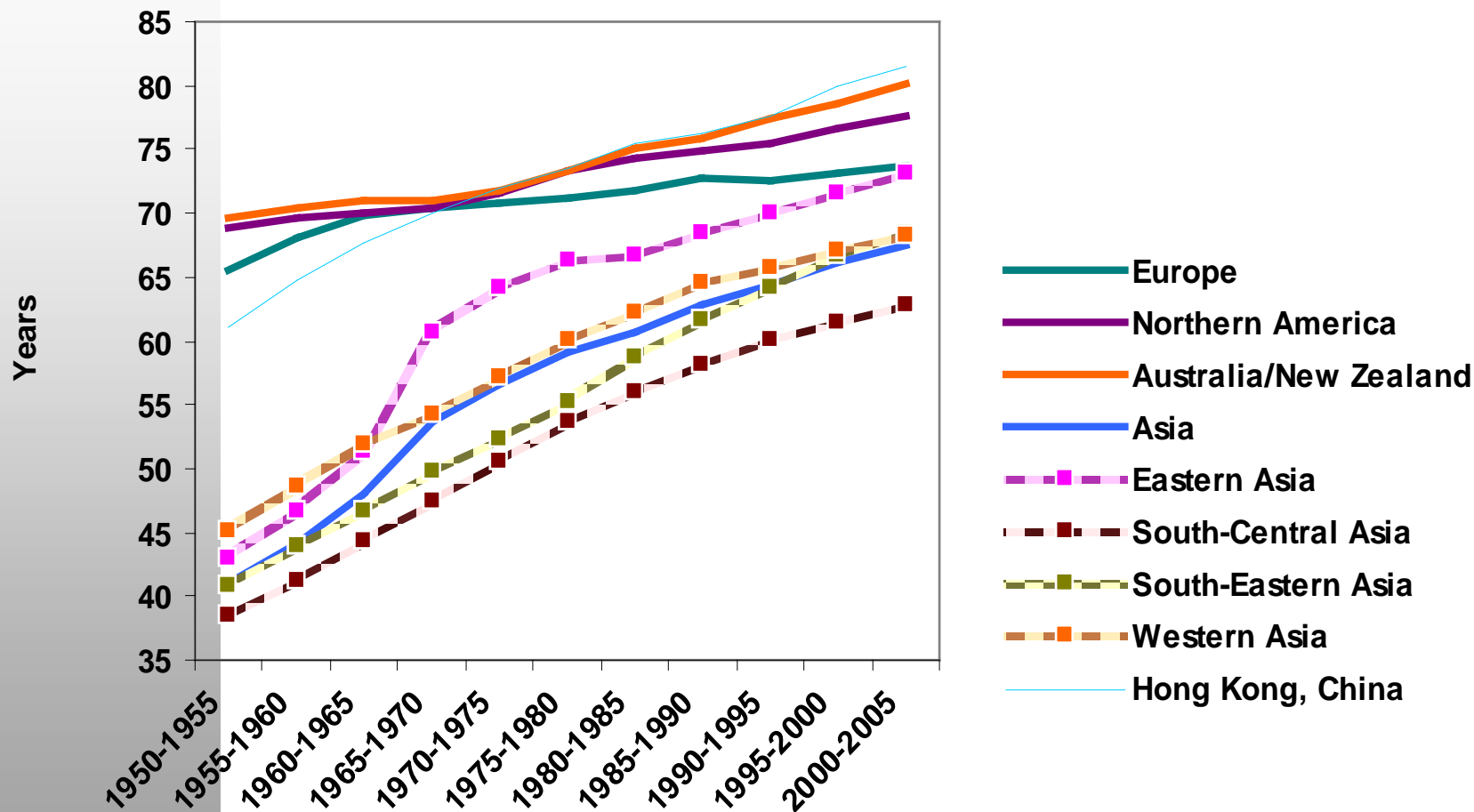


Fertility Trends by Major Region of the World 1950-2005



Source: World Population Prospects: The 2006 Population Division, New York.

Life Expectancy at Birth by Major Region of the World, 1950-2005



Source: World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision, United Nations Population Division, New York.



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Rapid Ageing in Asian Region

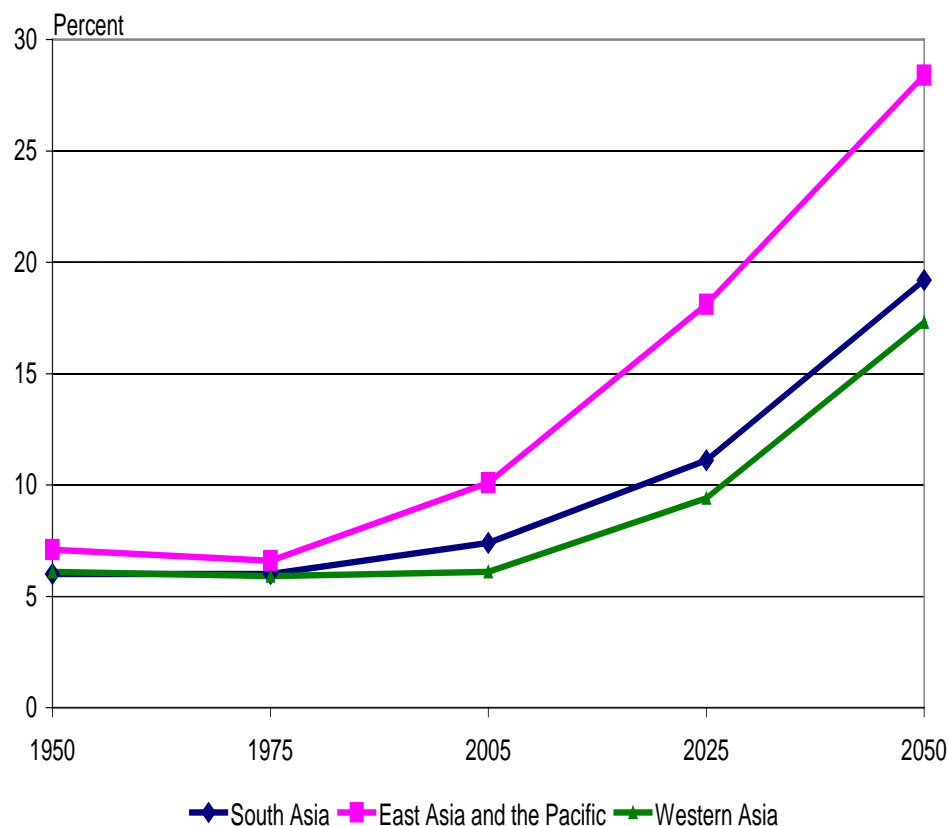
Number and % of older persons (60+)

416 million (10%) in 2009

733 million (15%) in 2025

1.3 billion (25%) in 2050

Figure 3: Growth of Older Population, 1950-2050



Age-dependency Ratios by Sub-regions, 1950-2050

	1950	1975	2005	2025	2050
Child dependency ratios					
East Asia and the Pacific	61	75	36	31	30
West Asia	75	87	59	45	35
South Asia	70	76	56	41	32
Old age dependency ratios					
East Asia and the Pacific	12	12	15	29	52
West Asia	11	12	10	15	28
South Asia	11	11	12	18	31
Total dependency ratios					
East Asia and the Pacific	73	87	51	60	81
West Asia	86	98	69	60	63
South Asia	81	87	68	59	64

Note: Dependency ratios are calculated as child population under 15 years and/or older population aged 60 and over to working age population 15-59. The data shows estimates until 2005 and medium-variant projections after 2005. Source: United Nations 2005.



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Implications of Aging Population

- The projected growth in the numbers and proportion of older population poses an array of challenges to our society.
 - Long-term disability, Assistance in daily living
 - Social isolation
 - Late life economic security
 - Burden on public expenditure (pension, health care, long-term residence care, etc).

Formal vs Informal Care

- Western model often portrays elderly as independent adult, seeking formal care system.
- But in reality, many families remain committed to care and support (Harper,2006)
- Also, increasing older adults provide major sources of elder care
- In Asia, the family, especially children has long considered as a primary care provider for elderly.
- “Filial piety” towards parents demands co-residence and continual attention

Can the family in Asia continue its function?

Changing Features of Asian Family (1)

- The availability of family support for elderly is being disrupted or eroded by recent demographic, socio-economic and cultural change
 - Decrease in average family size
 - Increase in nuclear family
 - More variety of living arrangement (living alone/consensual union)

Average Household Size, Selected Countries, 1980s and 1990s

Countries/areas	1980s	1990s
Hong Kong, China	—	3.6
China	—	3.1
Singapore	4.0	3.7
Japan	3.2	2.7
Indonesia	4.9	3.9
Thailand	4.7	3.9
Philippines	6.6	5.6
Bangladesh	5.7	5.0
India	5.5	5.4



Changing Features of Asian Family (2)

- Increasing mobility of family members and resulting dispersed living arrangement
- Increasing labour force participation of women
- Disruption of family life through divorce or separation
- All making the provision of care for elderly more difficult than before,

Need for More Intergenerational Solidarity



- How to cope with on-going rapid process of aging?
- Policy should allow families to manage the responsibilities of family care
- At the same time, move away from stereo-typical view of children as a primary care givers for elderly

Need for More Intergenerational Solidarity

- The inter-connectedness of all ages should be promoted in the manner that all age groups have meaningful roles to play.
- Meaningful opportunities should always be provided, so that interdependence between younger and older generations can be facilitated.
- The involvement of younger generation is extremely important.
- Younger generation can acquire life-cycle perspectives and benefit from the experience of older generations.

UN and Intergenerational Issue : MIPAA

- The international community has adopted a number of declarations calling for greater attention to intergenerational matters (Schindlmayr, 2006)
- Madrid Internal Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA), adopted at the Second World Assembly of Ageing in 2002.
- MIPAA recognizes intergenerational solidarity as a mechanism to respond to challenges of population ageing.

UN and Intergenerational Issue : MIPAA 5 year regional review

- Macao Outcome Document, 2007

34. Design policies and approaches that are *appropriate to the needs of the future generations of older persons*, recognizing the rapidly changing socio-economic contexts and characteristics of the current younger generation”

UN and Intergenerational Issue: WPAY

- ❖ UN expanded World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond (WPAY), in 2004 by adding another 5 priority areas:
 - ❖ Intergenerational relations
 - ❖ Globalization
 - ❖ CIT
 - ❖ HIV/AIDS
 - ❖ Youth in conflict



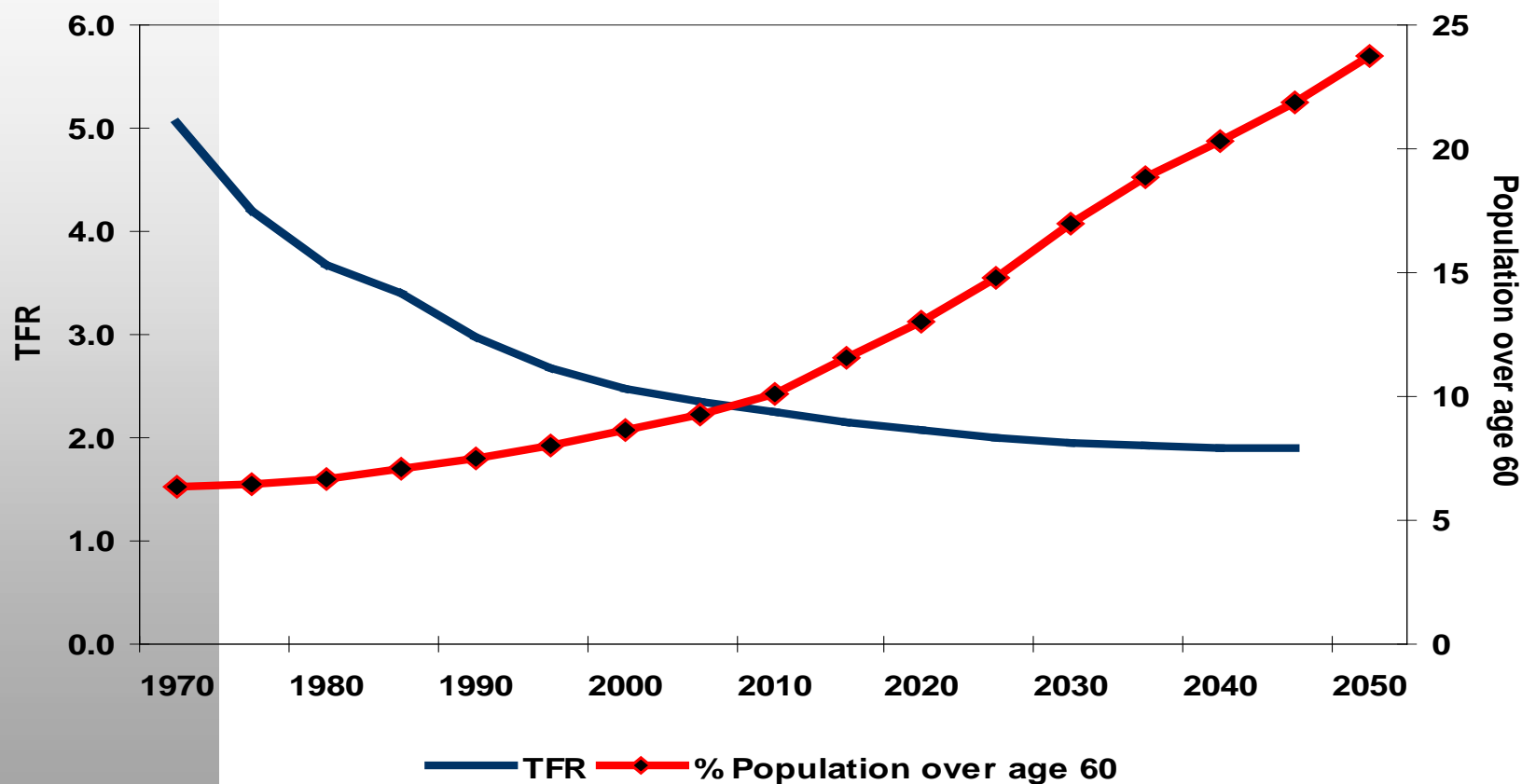
A home care volunteer in the Republic of Korea brings new meaning to life for an elderly woman who lives alone

Concluding Remarks

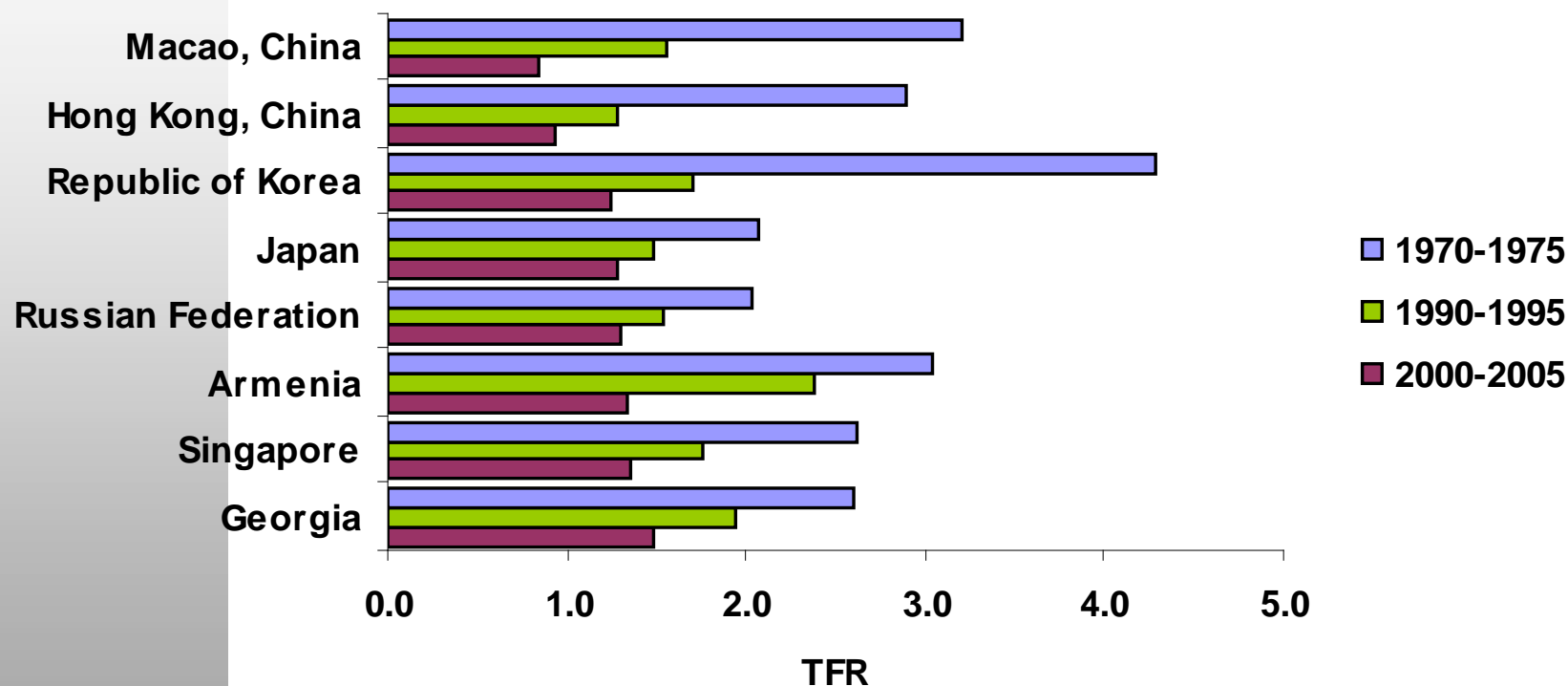
- Asian region witnessed a persistent decline in fertility and improvement in longevity. As a result, the rapid process of population ageing has become an inevitable challenge to the society.
- The family institution, which has provided a primary care for elderly in Asia, is now experiencing unprecedented changes in terms of size, structure and functions.
- One of the strategies to cope with further advancement of ageing societies is to strengthen inter-generational solidarity at all levels.
- The involvement of younger generations in intergenerational relations is extremely important.

Thank you !

TFR and Percentage of Population Over Age 60, ESCAP region, 1970-2050



Fertility trends in extremely low fertility countries (TFR below 1.6 children per woman)



Source: *World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision*, United Nations Population Division, New York.



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Percentage of working age population (15-59 years), 1950-2040

Year	East Asia	South Asia	SE Asia
2000	68.4	59.5	63.5
2005	70.4	61.5	65.3
2010	71.4	63.4	66.8
2015	71.1	64.9	67.8
2020	69.1	65.8	68.4
2025	67.7	66.6	68.5
2030	65.8	67.4	68.1
2035	63.4	68.1	67.4
2040	61.5	68.3	66.5