



the 1990s, the number of people in the world who are under 15 years of age has increased from 1.1 billion to 1.6 billion, and the number of people aged 65 and over has increased from 0.2 billion to 0.5 billion (United Nations, 1999). The number of people aged 65 and over is projected to increase to 1.1 billion by the year 2050 (United Nations, 1999).

There is a growing awareness of the need to develop strategies to meet the needs of the ageing population. The World Health Organization (WHO) has developed a 'Global Strategy on Ageing and Health' (WHO, 1999) which aims to 'enable older people to live longer, healthier, and more active lives'. The WHO strategy is based on three pillars: (1) 'Promoting healthy ageing', (2) 'Protecting older people from abuse and neglect', and (3) 'Ensuring that older people have access to the services and resources they need to live well'.

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