

Innovation in Accessible Transport for All

Overview of Issues

Ann Frye

Ann Frye Ltd



Innovation

- Innovation is about challenging traditional ways of thinking and working;
- Innovation is about finding new approaches and new solutions;
- Innovation is needed both in developed and developing economies: solutions can be high tech or low tech, complex or simple;
- But solutions cannot always be transferred from one to the other.

Setting the scene: Demographics



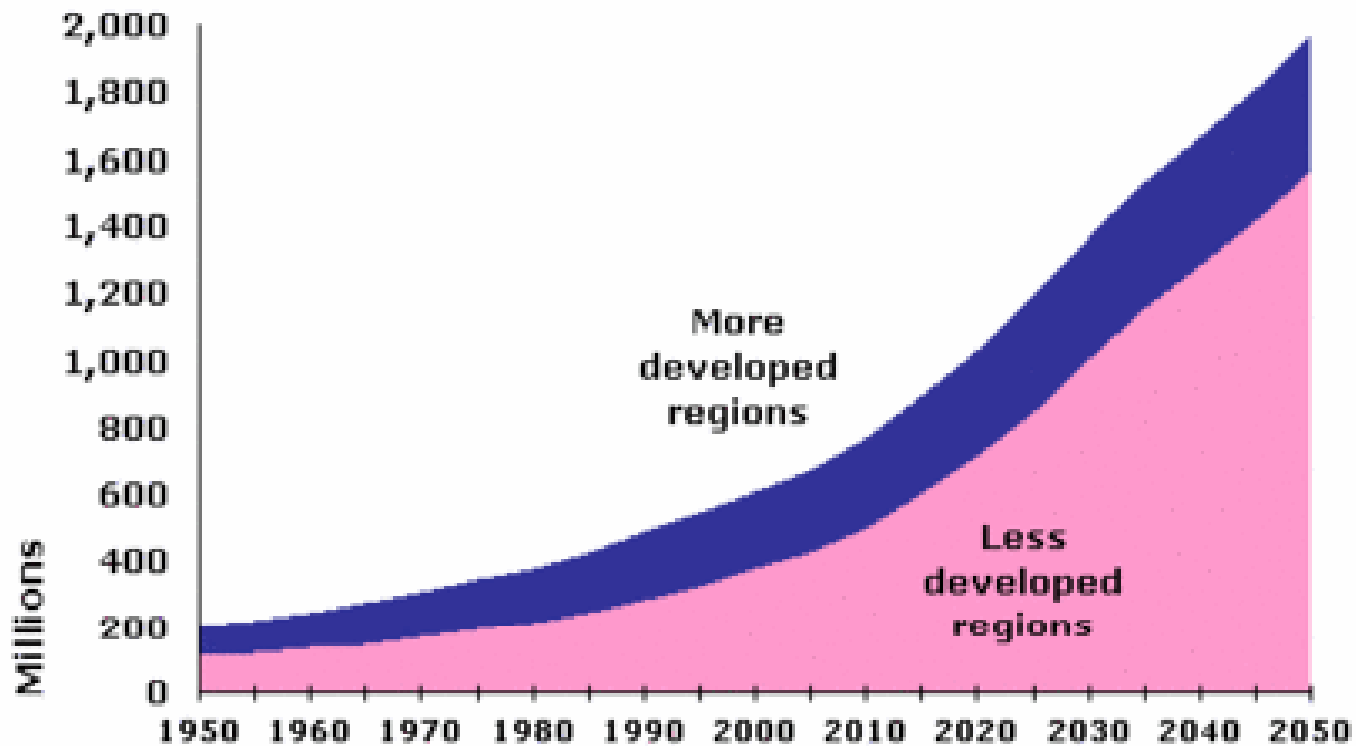
- Today almost 1 in 10 people in the world are over 60 years old;
- By 2050 the figure will be higher than 1 in 5, increasing from 673 million in 2005 to 2 billion;
- As the number of older people rises, the birth rate is falling;
- So there will be fewer working age people to sustain an ageing population without mobility.

Global population trends: Ageing

- Currently 64% of older people live in less developed regions, by 2050 this figure will rise to 80%;
- The number of people over 80 is growing at 4% per annum; the population as a whole is growing at 1% per annum;
- 3.5 million people will be over 100 years old by 2050: Over half will live in Asia.



Population over 60 by Region

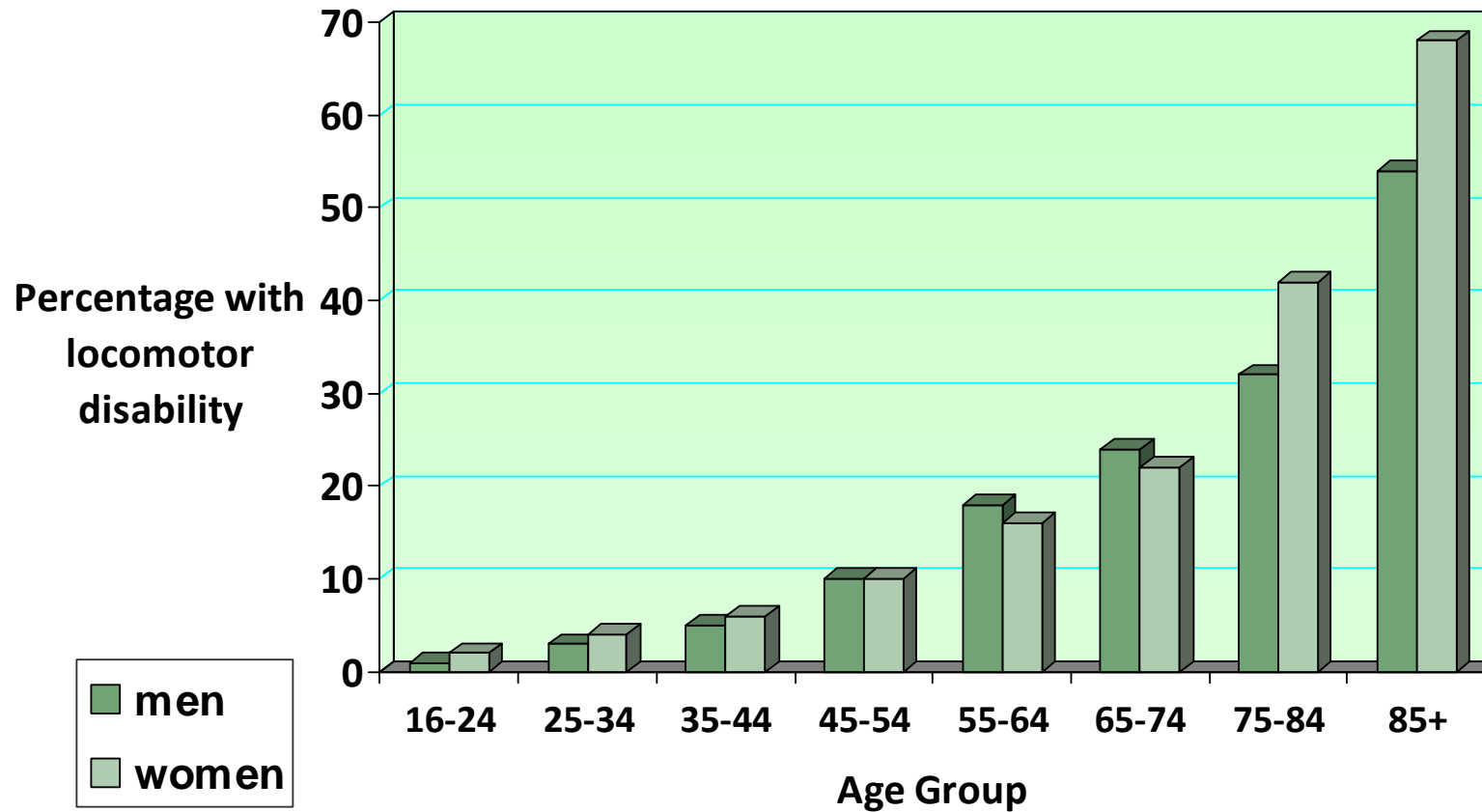


The link between age and disability



- There is a strong correlation between age and disability;
- Two thirds of disabled people are seniors.

Link between age and disability



Global population trends: Disability

- 80% of the world's 500 million disabled population live in developing countries;
- Ageing populations in developing countries will add to this number;
- There is a strong link between disability and poverty.



Other key trends: Urbanization

- Urbanization will be a universal trend in most societies of the future;
- Since 2007 more than half the world population has been urban;
- By 2025, nearly 60 % of the total world population will live in cities;
- There are economies of scale and benefits of higher density in reducing per capita costs for transport infrastructure, and possibly social services;
- But there are greater overall costs per capita in urban areas for basic services (higher quality/quantity of services);
- Urbanization will strain the fiscal capacity of urban areas to respond to new infrastructure needs.

Other key trends: Rural poverty

- Rural communities need very different solutions;
- Transport and infrastructure are often scarce – or non-existent;
- Isolation is one of the key factors affecting poverty: Settlements located away from main routes have little or no access to social services and markets;
- Access to health, education and employment opportunities is very limited;
- Within rural communities, households without assets and labour power are the poorest. They include old or disabled people.

Other key trends: Ageing in place

- Some countries are looking specifically at the impact of an ageing population on their infrastructure;
- Among priorities identified are:
 - Enabling older people to age in place;
 - Creating barrier free and accessible environments;
 - Enabling seniors to be well connected and active in society;
- Accessible public transport within a barrier free pedestrian environment are key to this vision.

Innovation in policy making

- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability is an important catalyst for change;
- It calls for new ideas and new technology to promote mobility and independent living;
- A key starting point is new thinking about how government structures recognise and support people with disabilities;
- **How can we make sure that signatures are translated into policy and changes on the ground?**

Innovation in collaborative working

- Accessible transport can bring significant health benefits;
- **Why is it so difficult for these benefits to be recognised in government investment?**
- New accessible public transport is often introduced alongside inaccessible streets and sidewalks;
- **Why can't different public authorities work together to create seamless travel?**



Innovation in engagement



- The engagement of people with disabilities is crucial to understanding and delivery;
- Their participation must be a non-negotiable part of every legal framework and policy making process;
- **Why are they so often marginalised or brought in too late?**

Innovation in Finance

- Fiscal and financial innovation are needed :
 - to open up new ways to support investment in accessible transport and pedestrian facilities;
 - To enable people with disabilities to travel so that they can find employment and live independently;
- **Too often accessibility is an afterthought – or left out entirely:
How can we break that cycle?**



Innovation in Research

- Too much research in the accessibility field is theoretical;
- We need innovative research to create real solutions to real problems;
- More attention needs to be focussed on low cost simple solutions that can help large numbers of people.;
- **How can we change the emphasis of research ?**



Innovation in Planning

- We need innovative approaches to land use planning so we don't build hospitals and shops where no-one can reach them;
- We need to re-create neighbourhoods as a basis for sustainable living;
- A good starting point would be to train all our planning and transport professionals so they understand the issues;
- **Why is that still not a routine requirement?**

Innovation in Design & Technology



- People with disabilities have benefitted from many advances and technology;
- But design effort is seldom directed primarily at understanding and meeting their needs;
- Cost and an insufficient market are often excuses for inaction;
- **What can we do to promote universal design concepts from which everyone benefits?**

Closing the Gap

- We have a significant gap
 - Between rhetoric and reality;
 - Between laws passed and laws enacted and enforced;
 - Between policy statements and financial commitment;
- **What will it take to close that gap?**



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