

In a society for all ages

# Active Ageing makes the difference

In 1999, during the International Year of Older Persons, WHO launched a new campaign highlighting the benefits of Active Ageing. This was in perfect harmony with the slogan for the International Year “Towards a Society or All Ages” as Active Ageing highlights the importance of social integration and health throughout the life course.

The campaign started on World Health Day 1999 when Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland, Director General of WHO, stated “there is much the individual can do to remain active and healthy in later life. The right life style, involvement in family and society and a supportive environment for older age all preserve well being. Policies that reduce social inequalities and poverty are essential to complement individual efforts towards Active Ageing.”

The Active Ageing campaign culminated in a “Global Embrace” on 2 October 1999 which consisted of a chain of celebrations and walks circling the globe during a 24-hour period.

**The Global Embrace aimed to:**

- ◆ inspire, inform, and promote health
- ◆ provide enjoyment to all generations
- ◆ draw attention to the public health benefits of Active Ageing.



**The Global Embrace:**

- ◆ linked local project leaders to a global community from all over the world
- ◆ mobilised volunteers and funding at the local level
- ◆ served as the launch of the Global Movement for Active Ageing, a new WHO initiative, to ensure that the momentum of 1999 will continue in the new century.

**Achievements of the Global Embrace:**

Well over one million people in 97 countries in both the developing and the developed world participated.

Organisers in developing countries responded with particular enthusiasm as little attention had previously been given to health promotion for older people.



*“The Global Embrace 1999 was an event Trivandrum will never forget.”*

Jothydev K.,  
Trivandrum, India

*“Older people are a human treasure and a precious capital for our countries and our cultures.”*

Ministry of Health, Chad



New partnerships were forged: service providers and medical centres linked with clubs and associations of older people, multisectoral NGOs linked with local government.

In addition to walks and celebrations, the events offered: blood pressure screenings, eye examinations and practical advice on nutrition and physical activities.

Many older people with disabilities participated highlighting that Active Ageing applies to all, including those that experience functional limitations.

Broad-based coalitions of international NGOs participated (e.g. HelpAge International, Rotary International, International Sports for All Association, International Council of Nurses, International Osteoporosis Foundation, International Federation of Medical Students’ Associations and others) disseminating news about the Global Embrace to their national affiliates.

**The media played an important role in the Global Embrace**

According to a survey evaluating the outcome of the Global Embrace, eighty-four percent of the events had media coverage in local and national radio, TV and newspapers.

The Internet was used extensively to reach a global public.

An interactive Website was opened for a 24-hour period which allowed participating cities to report “live” on their events.



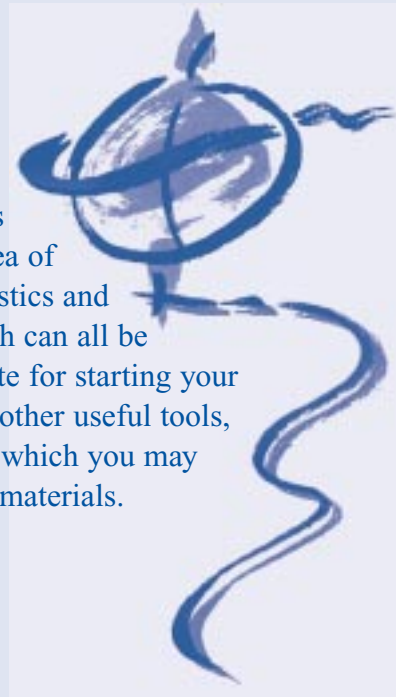
# The Global Embrace 2000

You are invited to join the Global Embrace 2000, a walk event and a celebration for Active Ageing on Sunday, 1 October 2000.

By walking and celebrating with young and old, the Global Embrace 2000 affirms the importance of staying active and healthy. Health at older ages concerns everyone. Healthy older people are a resource to their communities and families.

We urge cities, organisations and individuals all around the world to join the Global Embrace 2000 and to encircle the globe on 1 October, the International Day of Older Persons. It is your contributions, ideas and cultural perspectives, that will make this event unique. The growing numbers of older persons in the world's population in the 21st century should be celebrated as an achievement for all of humanity.

Local partnerships for Active Ageing are key for planning and implementing a successful event. Now is the time to build networks based on local priorities in the area of ageing. Walking, dancing, gymnastics and other activities that promote health can all be part of your event. See our Website for starting your media campaign. It also contains other useful tools, including the Active Ageing logo which you may wish to use for your promotional materials.



*"We stretched, we walked and we talked. All are eager to repeat the event in 2000."*

Barbara Forbes & Jacqueline Goffaux,  
Nashville, USA

*"Let us take steps forward into the next century, towards a happy and healthy ageing society."*

1999 Global Embrace participants,  
Nagano, Japan

# The Global Movement for Active Ageing

Do you want to know more about Active Ageing? Are you interested in the latest research results or in what your colleagues — researchers, practitioners and community activists — are doing in various parts of the world? The Ageing and Health Programme of WHO maintains a database of organisations interested in promoting information on Active Ageing programmes. It is also collecting information about project outcomes, new research and innovative policies on Active Ageing. The data will be made available on the Website. Tell us about your projects and join our network.

Join us by registering through our Internet site or return the attached response coupon by mail.

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*"It was very stormy and rainy in the Netherlands but over 10,000 walkers participated in the Global Embrace 1999."*

Dutch Committee International Year of  
Older Persons, Netherlands

*"We inspired people of different ages."*

Heini Parkkunen,  
Turku, Finland



World Health Organization



Global Movement  
for Active Ageing