# Learning in the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing: Insights from Canada and the UK

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13th June 2025

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# Background

- In 2030 people aged 60 years+ will have increased by 34% to 1.4 billion

- In 2020 people aged 60 years+ have for the first time outnumbered children under 5 years

- In most countries by 2030: population increases from 1 in 8 people aged 60 years + to 1 in 6

- Many developing countries must adapt more quickly to ageing populations

# Context

**UN Decade of Healthy Ageing framework**

- *Healthy ageing is developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables well-being in older age.*

- Functional ability is determined by the intrinsic capacity of an individual, the environment in which he or she lives and the interactions among them.

# Context

## WHO defines well-being

"a positive state experienced by individuals and societies. Similar to health, well-being is considered to be a resource for daily life and is understood as determined by social, economic and environmental conditions. Moreover, well-being encompasses quality of life and the ability of people and societies to contribute to the world with a sense of meaning and purpose"

(World Health Organisation, 2021, p.10).

# UN Decade of Healthy Ageing

4 priority areas:

- Combatting ageism
- Age-friendly environments
- Integrated care
- Long-term care

- Uses the term lifelong learning = skills acquisition & maintenance for the labour market

# Our position:

learning in later life serves multiple purposes

often hindered by personal, societal and systemic barriers

the role of learning in promoting healthy ageing remains under explored

need for context-sensitive, culturally-relevant, co-developed educational programs that recognise older adults as a heterogenous group

# Holistic view of learning in later life

- learning as an enriching experience (James 2016)
- creates positive attitudes towards ageing (Hori &Cusack 2004)
- social connectivity (Bădescu 2012; Hafford-Letchfield 2014)
- opportunities for intergenerational connections (Gallagher & Fitzpatrick, 2018; Tuohy et al., 2023; López Gómezet al., 2024)
- critical consciousness (Formosa & Galea 2020; Cusack 2000, Hori &Cusack 2004)
- influences the perceived quality of life (Molina & Schettini, 2021)
- maintaining cognitive capacities (Frank et al. 2023)
- feelings of self-actualisation (Purdie & Boulton-Lewis, 2003)

# 3 learning initiatives

'**The Storytelling Club'** –part of a community-based initiative in Canada

Aim to offer language learning experience to older adult immigrants, build social capital and encourage leadership in their communities

**An intergenerational workshop** on 'sustainability' – based somatic co-creation i.e. "chormmunity" (Loper 2000)

**The Ageing Well Public Talks** – a monthly online public educational initiative

evidence based and co-designed by service providers & users

online resources on a range of topics for positive health choices (healthy Ageing)

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# Video clip

*Reflective questions:*

- What do you think the outcome of the workshop was?

- Have participants developed a new perspective?

- Have they felt empowered to address the concept of 'being with less?'

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# Conclusion

No one-size-fits-all curriculum / approach

Prioritize learner-centered approaches (Hachem & Vuopala, 2016)

be flexible and context driven

learning as enriching and empowering activity in later life

this supports a positive well-being

If you have any questions, please get in contact:

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# Thank you

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