



Sustainability – The future impact of IYOP

At the outset of the planning for the International Year of Older Persons, we emphasised the need to ensure the sustainability of achievements at all levels of the community beyond 1999. This was considered to be a measure of the success of even relatively short-term projects, undertaken within the context of an International Year. It is evident that substantial progress can continue to be made well after the end of the United Nations designated year as was demonstrated in Australia by the long-term outcomes of the International Year of Disabled Persons 1981.

Although there were many organisations that planned time-limited projects and activities for IYOP, there was an ongoing emphasis for partner organisations to think laterally and promote sustainable outcomes and action wherever possible.

Some of the plans for 'beyond 1999', as provided by non-government organisations across Australia, can be summarised within the following categories.

Conferences/congresses/festivals/weeks/days/open days

These non-government activities relate in some way to ageing. Some were held for the first time in 1999 and plan to be continued annually. These include:

- Council on the Ageing National Congress
- National Ageing Research Institute Conference on the Biology of Ageing
- Probus Centre – South Pacific 'Rendezvous' on the Gold Coast
- Seniors Online Day
- Australian Library Week for visually disabled people



Other activities which are well established as ongoing functions include those run by the Australian Association of Gerontology, Aged and Community Services Australia and Geriaction.

Policy and position papers and statements

These relate to the ways older people are to be respected and served and are to be upheld by the Boards/Councils of national professional associations including:

- Australian Psychological Society
- Alcohol and Other Drugs Council of Australia
- Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists' new Faculty of Psychiatry of Old Age
- The Commonwealth Government of Australia's 'National Strategy for an Ageing Australia' inviting input from the general community

Research programs and projects

Some research initiatives have been funded as ongoing projects, but there are remarkably few new research programs being planned. Most of the research that was identified nationally assessed the potential value of different strategies of promoting awareness of ageing. The strategies included different contexts and populations; how to influence staff to reduce negative outcomes of ageist practices (e.g. Catholic Health Australia and Commonwealth Bank of Australia); age-related disabilities (Arthritis Foundation of Australia); and age-related visual disorders (Australian Vision Research Institute).



Awards and recognition ceremonies

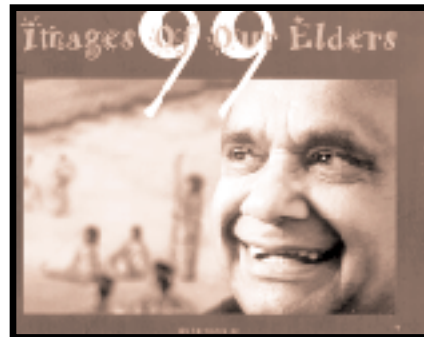
AC '99 supported the Commonwealth Government Senior Australian of the Year Award and the Senior Australian Achievers awards which were managed in 1999 by the National Australia Day Council (NADC). The Senior Australian of the Year Award will continue on an annual basis through a partnership between the National Australia Day Council and the National Seniors Association with sponsorship from the Commonwealth Bank and the Federal Government.

Educational programs

A wide range of educational initiatives was undertaken in 1999 with many being sustained beyond IYOP. These include: specific training (Internet banking for older people and for staff providing retail and special in-service training to understand ageing as a process, by the Commonwealth Bank and The Body Shop); the production of general resource materials such as a best practice manual for Masters Games organisers by the Confederation of Australian Sport in partnership with the National Australia Bank; regular staff in-house television training programs (Commonwealth Bank); OnLine Australia Day, an initiative conceptualised by AC '99 and taken up by OnLine Australia in tandem with Adult Learning Australia and other NGOs; Adult Learning Australia programs, in particular the *Learning Circles* project, which is a national project anticipating a big future.

Art and media projects

Long Lives on Screen, a national film festival, will continue; travelling displays of photographic exhibitions, including Hammond Care Group's *Images of our Elders* (in partnership with the Westfield Group) may continue in a reduced format. Concerts like those organised by the Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria which have been funded for 2000, are more likely to be organised at state level rather than nationally. Radio and television, particularly the commercial networks, were 'hard nuts' to crack by AC '99 nationally, and there is more evidence of Australia-wide success in these media when we review the impacts reported by the states and the Commonwealth Government's community service announcements. The many arts (theatre, print, exhibitions, film) activities at state level are exciting outcomes with some being planned to continue.



Advertising

There is a plan for the National Association of Advertisers to support awareness of ageing projects across the industry, particularly in the tertiary media training arenas. At least one major industry publication, *Ad News*, has advised of its interest in continuing a competitive approach to changing stereotypes held by the industry.



Cosmetic and health care products

The Body Shop plans to continue its involvement in some way. However, AC '99 did not penetrate the fashion or the huge cosmetic industries even marginally and this is another major field of 'unfinished business', with much to develop in the future. Funding and support of a non-government organisation to underwrite ongoing project management of any campaign will require dedicated resources and special initiatives. It is the intention of the AC '99 Secretariat and The Body Shop to develop and promote new strategies to facilitate ongoing commitment to positive image and ageing. Initial conversations are being scoped with the Retail Traders Association and the Toiletries and Cosmetic Industry Association with a view to their possible participation. It may be possible to promote 'towards a society for all ages' as an underlying message throughout forthcoming campaigns undertaken by this unique Australian company.

Other partnerships

It is evident that many partner organisations are keen to continue the work that they undertook and continue to undertake as a result of IYOP. Without the communication lynchpin provided by the AC '99 Secretariat, the onus to sustain communications will be placed on individual non-government organisations around the country. The advancements for older people will continue as long as NGOs maintain responsibility for older people through their programs and in conjunction and consultation with their stakeholders, including older people themselves. There will also be the opportunity for NGOs to inform other organisations in the community of the potential for them to promote positive ageing through their own initiatives. It is hoped that NGOs will continue to recognise the benefit of partnerships with other organisations and the benefit of sharing ideas and resources for the well-being of older Australians.

New partnerships include:

- that between the Pharmacy Guild of Australia and Council on the Ageing (Australia) to undertake a peer education project on *Being in Control: Older People and their Pharmaceuticals*
- the Girl Guides movement in partnership with The Body Shop in the conduct of workshops on body image
- the Department of Veterans' Affairs and Vision Australia on a national pilot program on age-related visual disabilities
- the record keeping for *Australia's Family Heritage 2001* (Centenary of Federation) project by the National Seniors Association in partnership with the Victorian State Library
- National Ageing Research Institute, Jobs East and the Association of Independent Retirees Inc. to collaborate on case studies and share information through organisations' newsletters
- the opportunity which presents itself to all business and community organisations to get involved with the UN 2001 International Year of Volunteers
- the first national *Meeting of Generations* conference held in November 1999 in Sydney, bringing together older and younger people to discuss issues affecting both generations. A report with recommendations is being compiled and will be circulated to all levels of government and community organisations across Australia for consideration





The special sustainable outcomes of the different states and territories have already been covered elsewhere in this publication. One overall observation is the likely collective and collaborative work of older people's organisations, and possibly new alliances of people at community level, to be more active in proposing and monitoring policy development and change – for example, the Platform for Ageing in New South Wales, the Elders' Council (of indigenous elders) in South Australia; the plans to continue the forums of AC '99 Victorian partners in IYOP + 1, + 2, + 3 – to name but a few.

It would be worthwhile to review the longer term outcomes of the International Year on the potential impact of the experience of partnerships on the NGOs' ongoing and sustainable activities. To undertake a study of this kind, funding would be required.

International partnerships

In regard to international partnerships, AC '99 was actively engaged in major United Nations and SE Asian and Pacific Regional activities.

The World Health Organisation developed the concept of the Global Walk 'for all ages' (also known as the Global Embrace) which was taken up by many partner organisations with great enthusiasm. The Walk coincided with the International Day of Older Persons (annually observed internationally on 1st October) and was the local part of the WHO Global Embrace. There was a huge diversity in the way large and very small groups used this opportunity to be cross-generational and positive about ageing and have fun! It was so successful internationally that WHO used it to launch the Global Movement For Active Ageing initiative. This new Global Movement is an obvious outcome of IYOP and is to have a start-up period during 2000 – 2001. WHO is planning partnerships with NGOs, all levels of government and academic sectors (website: http://www.who.int/ageing/global_movement).



The Chair of AC '99, Delys Sargeant, is likely to have the opportunity to present a national overview of NGO attention to the needs of older women to the United Nations Program on Ageing, Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in 2000.

Other linkages nurtured throughout 1999 including that with AARP (formerly the American Association of Retired Persons), Age Concern (UK and NZ) and HelpAge International along with other international NGOs will be fostered by Council on the Ageing (Australia) and other partner organisations beyond IYOP.

Maintaining awareness

The United Nations has approved the continued use of a revised version of the IYOP logo. It can be used for illustrative purposes in documents or articles, which are not intended to raise funds or advertise products and services. The revised image no longer includes reference to 1999 or the International Year of Older Persons and is intended to be used as a symbol of the continued importance of working toward a society for all ages and to sustain the momentum gained through the International Year.

AC '99 believes there is real value in the continued use of this symbol, which took some time to gain a state of 'good currency' and that has international meaning. The symbolism represented by the concentric circles of the logo uphold the values of vitality of mind, spirit and body, and the need to acknowledge and value diversity, independence and interdependence. These symbolic meanings have been found very useful in discussing policies which promote positive ageing.

If you would like more information on using the revised IYOP logo, please visit the website: www.iyop.health.gov.au.