Demographic Trends Shape Unintentional Injury Patterns

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World Population Growing Older

Older Adults Ages 65+

2018
0.7 billion

↓

2050
1.6 billion

1 in 11
1 in 6

Source: UN Population Division
World Population Growing Older

Children Ages 0-14

2018
2.0 billion

2050
2.1 billion

Source: UN Population Division
World Population More Urban

Urban Residents

2018
4.2 billion

2050
6.7 billion

Source: UN Population Division
The Case of Thailand

Older Adults

Residents

2018

1 in 9

2050

1 in 4

Urban

1 in 2

7 in 10

Source: UN Population Division

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Population Aging

Age and Unintentional Injuries
Older Adults: Falls

- Half of total DALYs due to unintentional injuries among ages 70+ (18% among all age groups)

- Compared to men, women more likely to be disabled than to die from falls

- Chronic illnesses, functional limitations, and inadequate environments

Source: WHO
Young Adults: Traffic Injuries

- Young men: #1 cause of death
  Young women: #2 cause
- Young men account for 26% of DALYs-traffic injuries (account for 12% of total population)
- More reckless driving and less experience behind the wheel

Source: WHO
Children: Drowning & Poisoning

- Under age 5 account for:
  - 28% of DALYs-drowning
  - 35% of DALYs-poisoning

- Inadequate adult supervision
- Proximity to open water source (drowning)
- Smaller body size and curiosity (poisoning)

Source: WHO
Urbanization

Urban Residence and Unintentional Injuries
Drivers of Urbanization

- Migration from rural to urban areas
- Births to urban dwellers
  - migration of childbearing-age adults to urban areas
  - high fertility among urban poor
- Changes in rural and peri-urban area classification
Urban Residents: Traffic Injuries

- Higher in urban areas than rural areas
- Most road injury deaths in high-income countries happen to vehicle drivers and passengers
  - In low- and middle-income countries, pedestrians and motorcyclists
Rural: Drowning

- Higher in rural areas than urban areas

- Access to more open water sources, and occupations with higher risks of drowning in rural areas
Rural-to-Urban Migrants:

• Higher unintentional injury risks
  - greater occupational hazards
  - poorer housing conditions
  - some face high risks during migration

• May be less likely to access care following injuries

• Implications on safety of their family members
What to Expect Next?
Implications for Future Injury Burden
Population Aging

Falls
- More older women than men
- Older labor force, particularly with more older female workers

Drowning and Poisoning
- Currently young countries will experience growth in youth before aging
Urbanization

Traffic Injuries

Downing

-Fewer adult children to provide physical support to older adults in rural areas with high out-migration
How Can Countries Prepare?

• Enact road safety regulations/enforcement

• Implement multifaceted interventions to reduce the risk of falls among older adults

• Plan and invest in urban infrastructure
How Can Countries Prepare?

• Public safety not “automatically” improved by economic development
  - Resources must be purposefully put towards reducing unintentional injuries
  - Plan and implement sustainable safety policies and regulations
THANK YOU!

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