

Age-friendly Environments and the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities

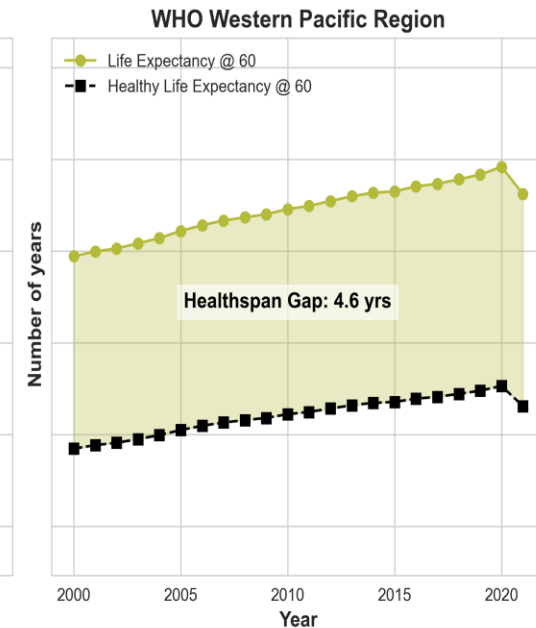
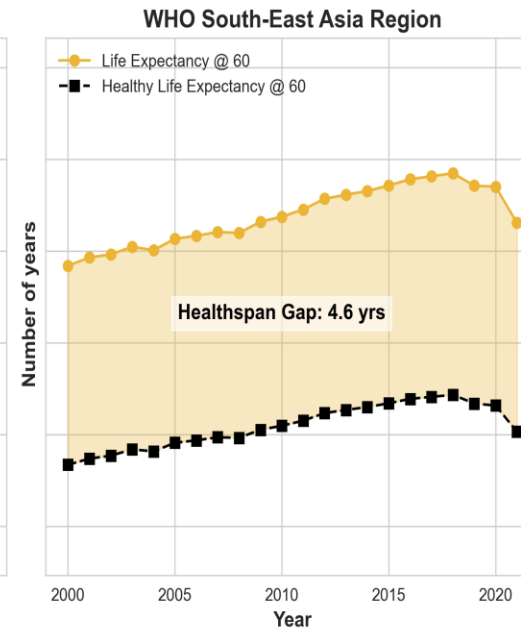
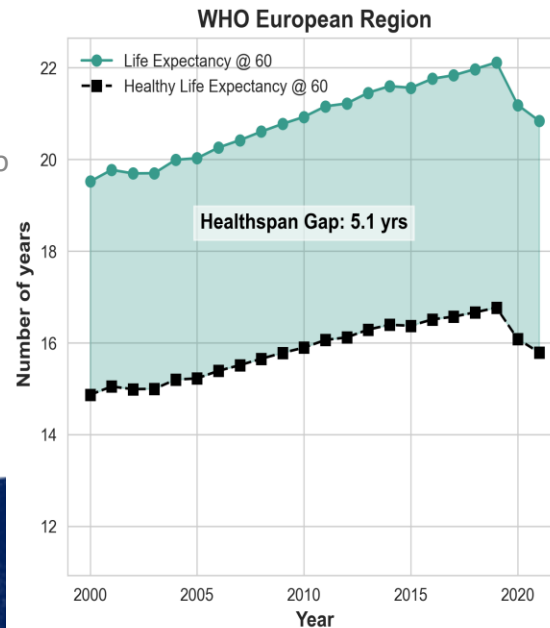
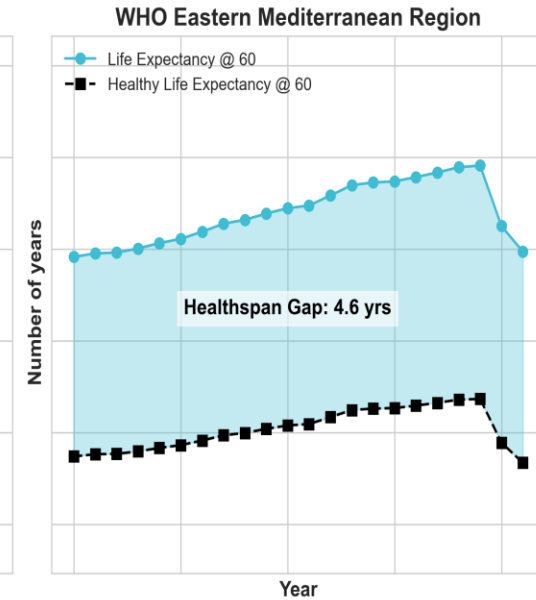
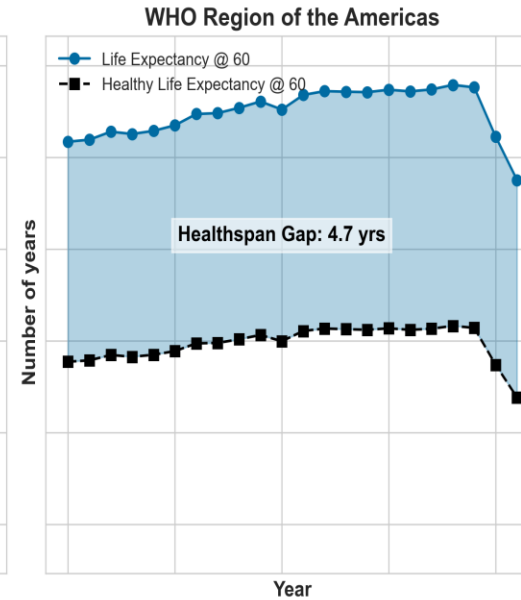
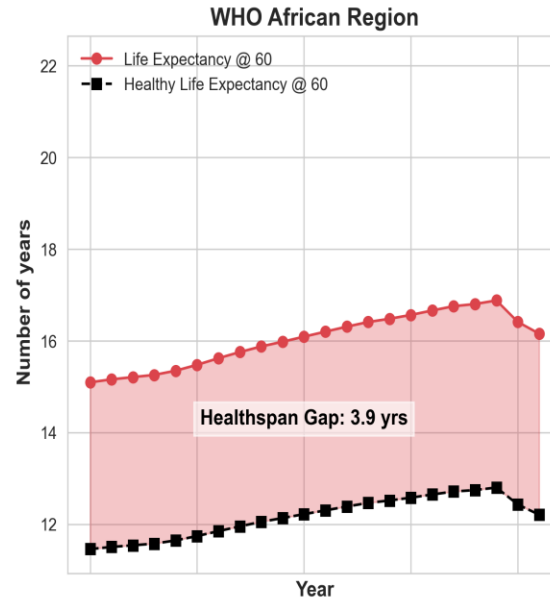
Thiago Herick de Sa,
Technical Officer – Age-friendly environments
Health Determinants, Promotion and Prevention
Department, World Health Organization





**Decade
of healthy
ageing**

We are living longer, but not (yet) healthier



Source:
<https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GHO/gho-ghe-hale-healthy-life-expectancy-at-age-60>WHO Global Health Estimate 2024





United Nations Decade
for Healthy Ageing
(2021–2030)

Action Area 2. **Age-friendly Environments**

Ensure that communities foster
the abilities of older people

Our environments are key to closing the gaps



Housing



**Assistive
technologies**



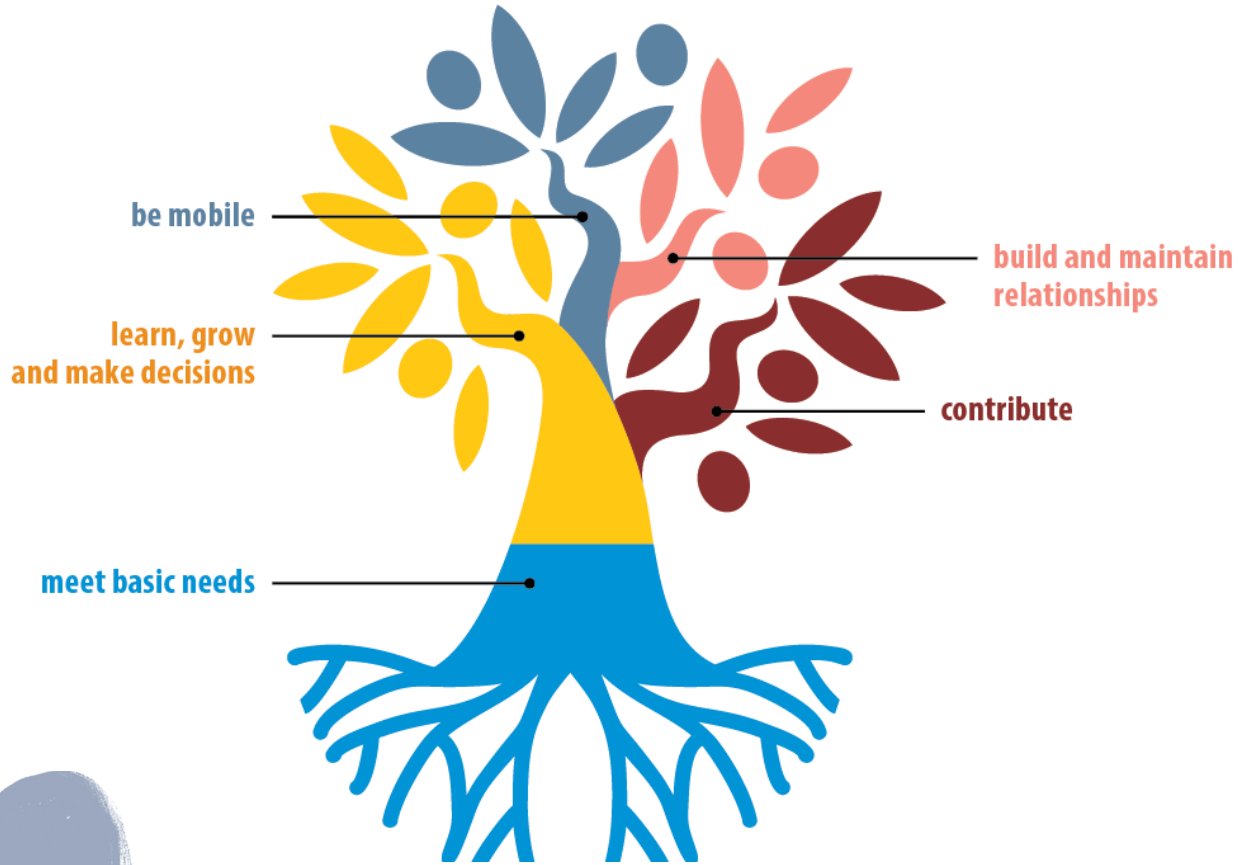
Transport



**Social
facilities**

Environments comprise all the factors in the outside world that form the context of an individual's life.

These include home, communities, and the broader society. Within these environments are a range of factors, including the built environment, people and their relationships, attitudes and values, health and social policies, the systems that support them, and the services that they implement.



Age-friendly environments enable all people to:

- ✓ age well in a place that is right for them
- ✓ continue to develop personally
- ✓ be included
- ✓ contribute to their communities
- ✓ enjoy independence and good health



Age-friendly environments benefit all community members by removing physical and social barriers and fostering inclusiveness.

This not only benefits older people. It also improves accessibility, addresses gender inequities, and helps build the resilience of communities for emergencies.





Creating age-friendly environments is also one of the action areas of the **UN Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021–2030)**.



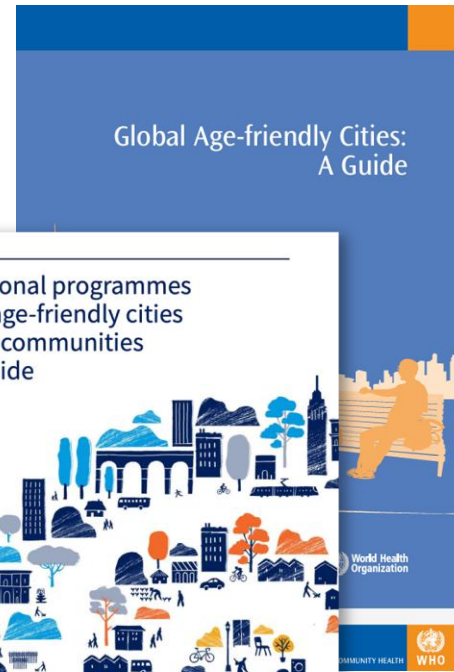
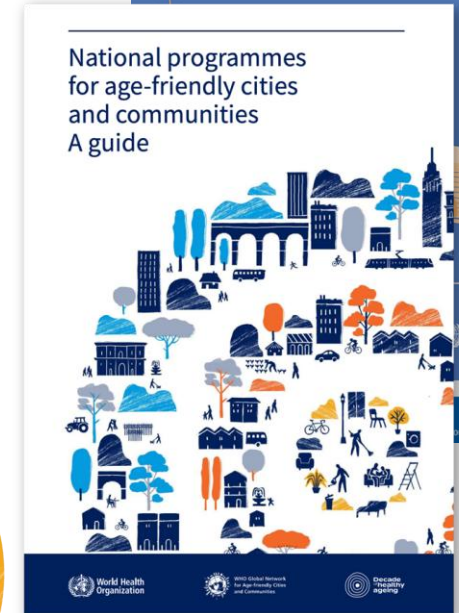
The Decade is aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and a commitment by all Member States to improve the lives of current and future generations of older people.

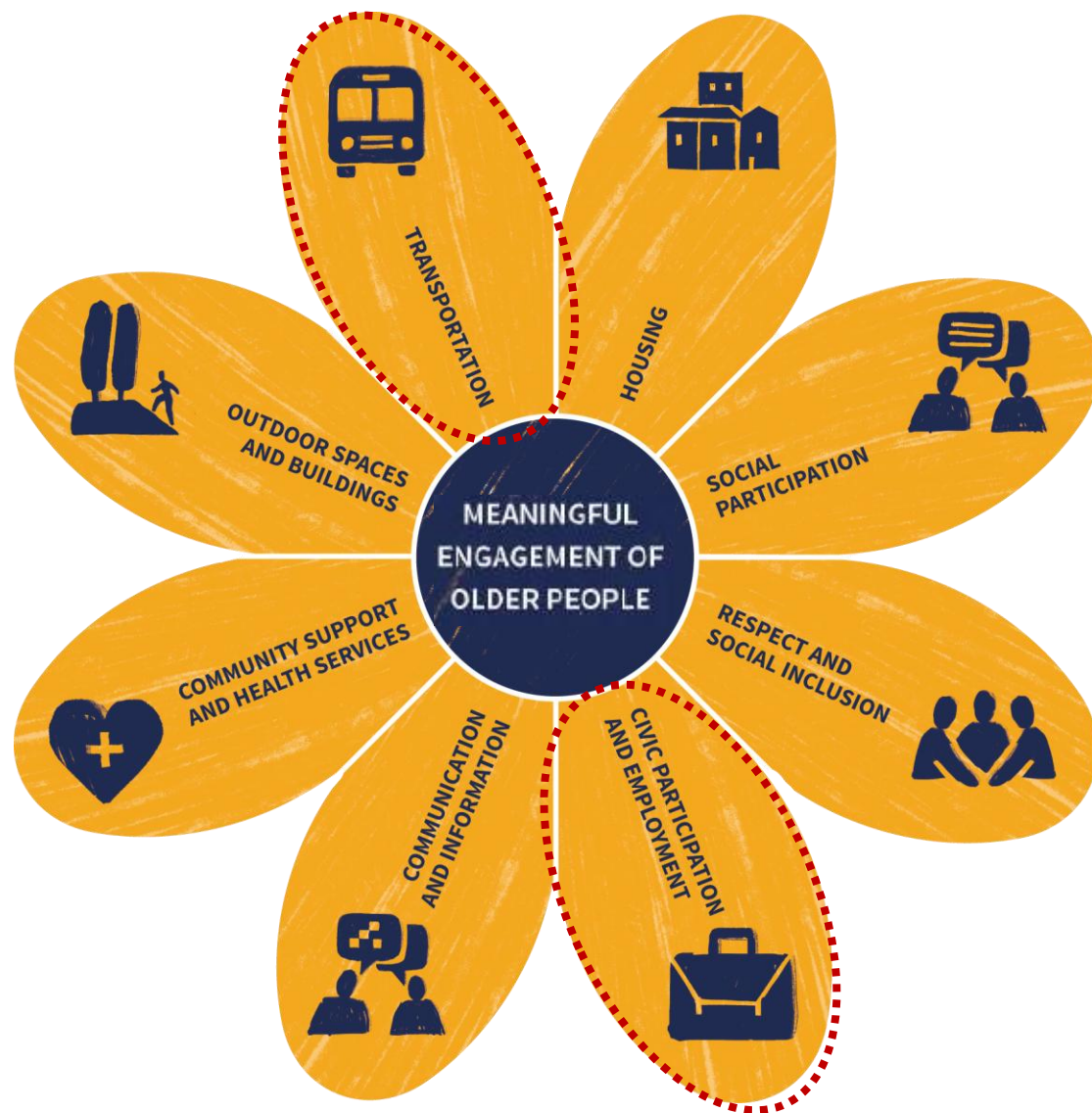


Developing age-friendly cities and communities is a proven way to create age-friendly environments.

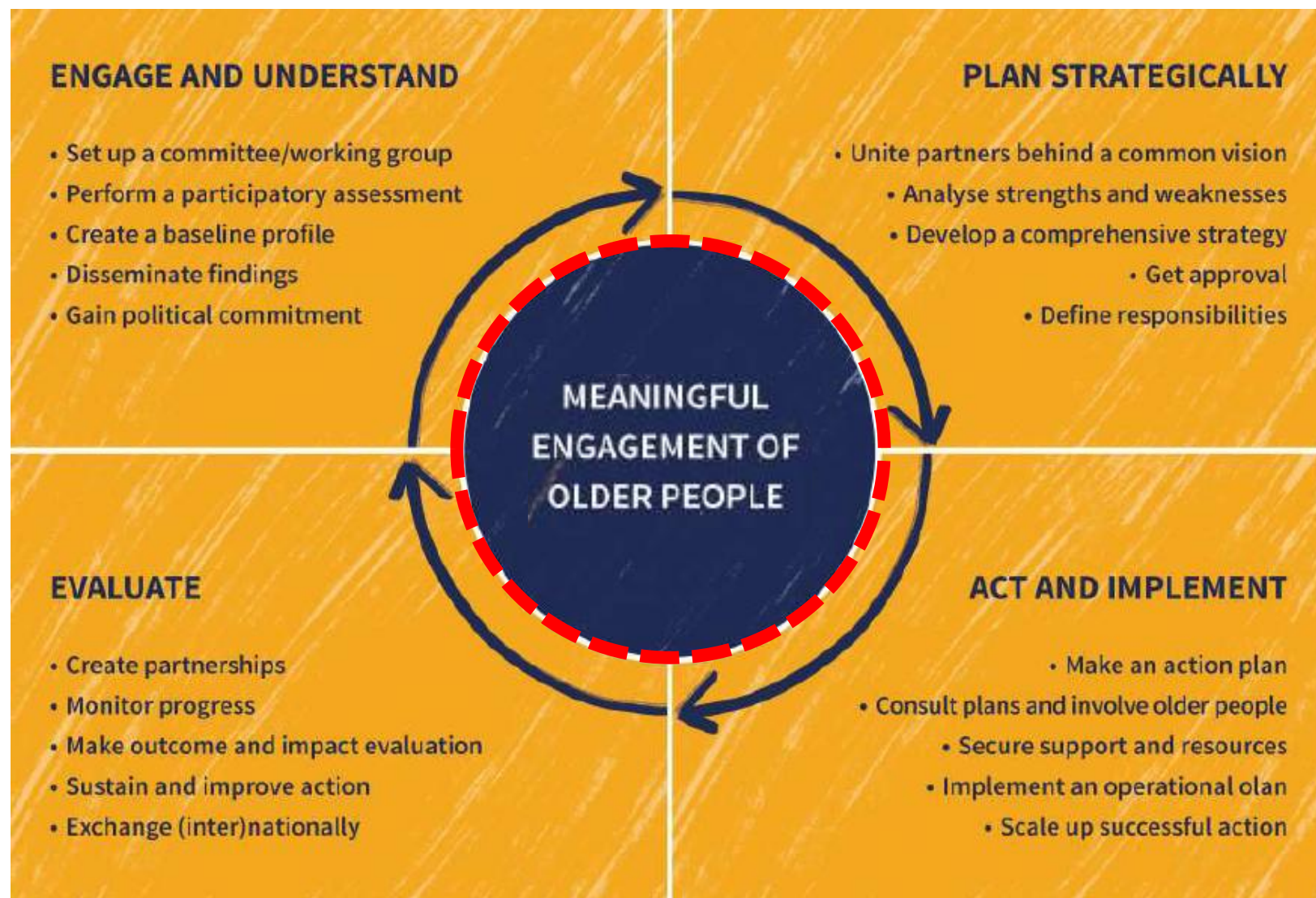
Age-friendly cities and communities are those that foster healthy ageing by building and maintaining intrinsic capacity across the life course and enabling greater functional ability in someone with a given level of capacity.

Ultimately, they enable people to be and do what they value through action across **eight domains**:

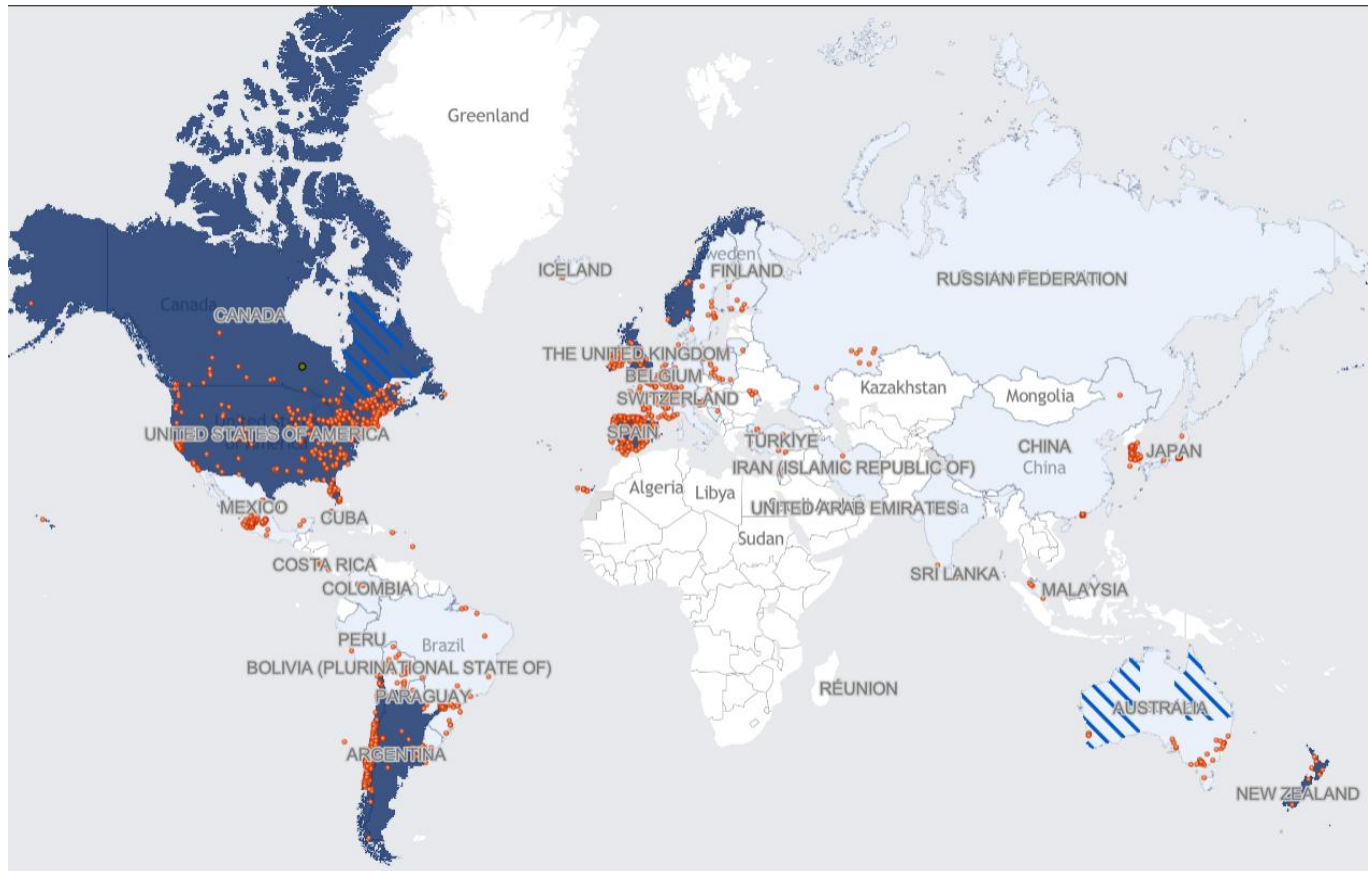




Age-friendly cities and communities follow a series of age-friendly cycles in their journey.



WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities, featuring over 1700 members across more than 60 countries all committed to becoming more age-friendly.



Learn more about the Global Network here:





Committed To Becoming More Age-Friendly

Porto

Portugal

City population: 231800

25 % over 60

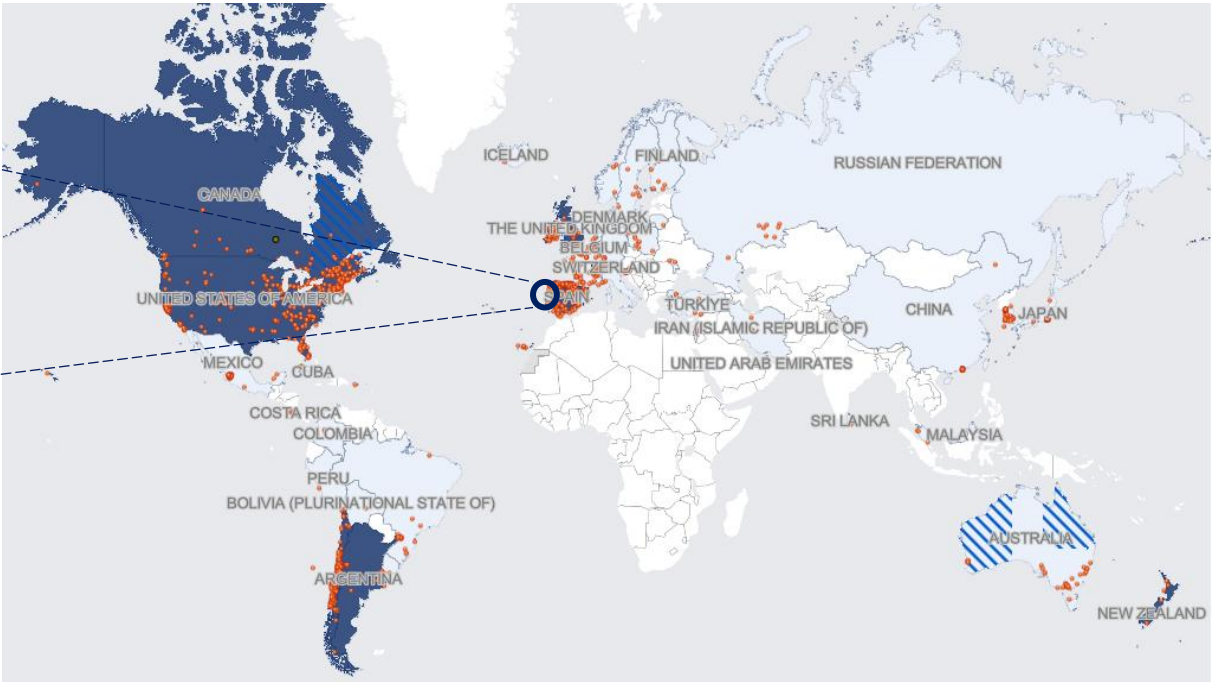
Joined Network in 2011

Print this page

Age-friendly Practices

- Acessibilidade nos Transportes
- No Porto a Vida é Longa
- Rua Direita
- Estamos Juntos
- Jornadas CAPI – Cidade Amiga das Pessoas Idosas
- Contas à Vida
- Porto Importa-se
- Quem Sou Eu?
- O Porto é Lindo! – Roteiros Turísticos +65
- Residências Partilhadas para Idosos
- Porto Amigo program
- Aconchego Program

<https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/network/porto/>



Age-friendly Journey

Cycle 4 (2025)



Meaningful engagement of older people – ‘nothing about us without us’

- Immediate beneficiaries
- Advocates for age-friendly initiatives
- Engaged directly in decision-making



- Leaders or co-implementers of age-friendly practice and programs
- Involved in participatory research
- Accountability and transparency

Exchange meetings led by older people between age-friendly communities, Mataro, Spain





Verdens helseorganisasjons
globale nettverk
for aldersvennlige byer og kommuner



세계보건기구
고령친화 도시 및 커뮤니티
국제네트워크



WHO グローバルネットワーク
高齢者に優しいまち



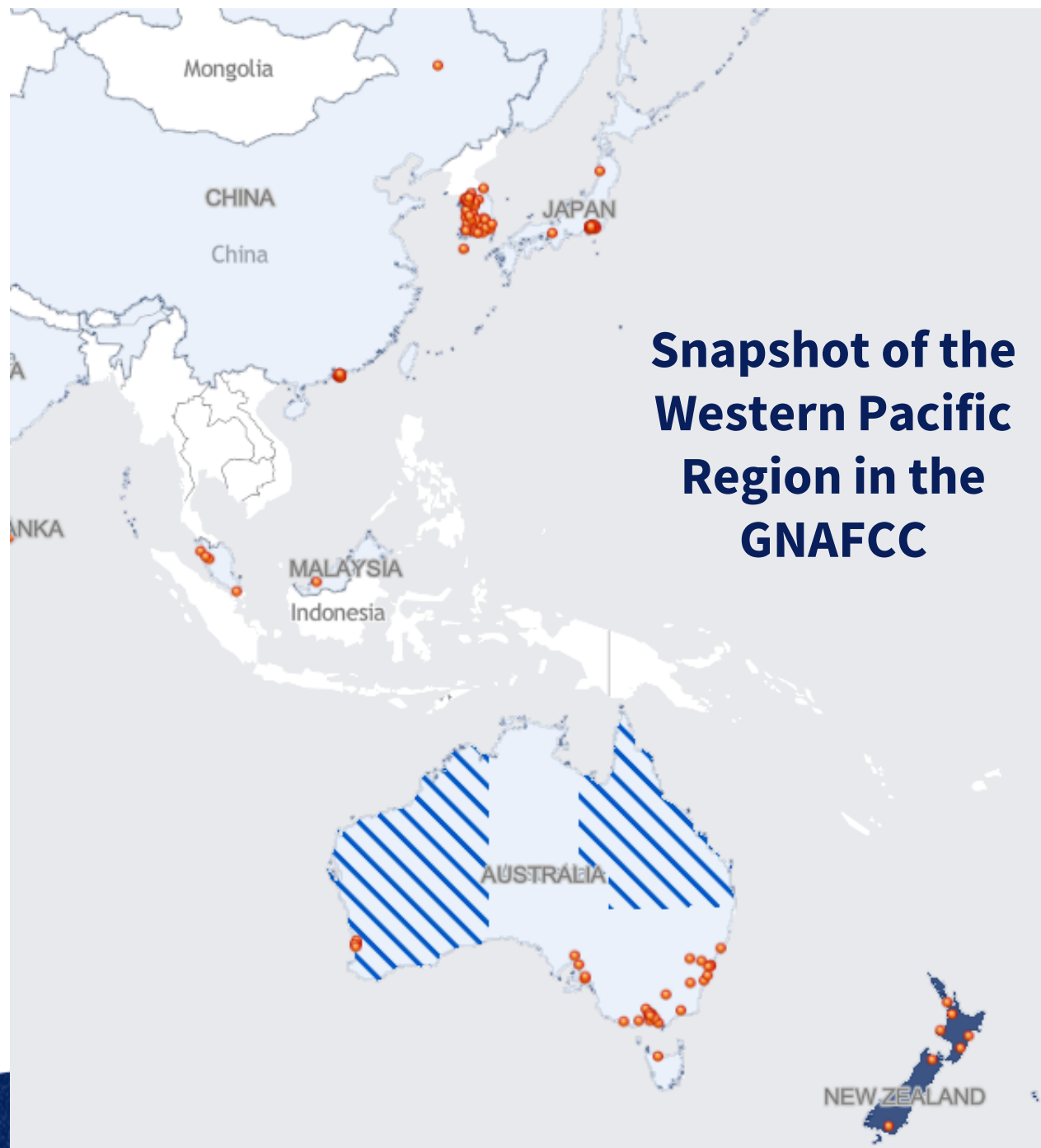
WHO:s globala nätverk
för åldersvänliga
städer och samhällen



世界卫生组织
老年友好
城市和社区全球网络

- ✓ Created in 2010, demand from cities involved in the Age-friendly Cities guide (2007)
- ✓ Common vision: to make communities a great place to grow older in
- ✓ Mission: connect; inspire; support
- ✓ Steady growth, large uptake in both high and low- and middle-income countries in the last five years





- **5 Affiliate programs**: 2 national (New Zealand and Singapore) and 3 subnational (Western Australia, Queensland, Kanagawa)
- **Countries with a large or growing number of members** (e.g., New Zealand, Australia, Japan, Republic of Korea)
- **Only seven countries with at least one city or community committed to become more age-friendly member of the network** (Australia, China, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Singapore)
- **No affiliate program, city or community from SIDS**

Snapshot of the Western Pacific Region in the GNAFCC

WPRO REGION COUNTRY	FIRST GNAFCC MEMBER	NUMBER OF CITIES & COMMUNITIES	NETWORK AFFILIATES
Australia	2011	35	2 sub-national (Queensland and Western Australia)
China	2011	19	-
Japan	2011	24	1 sub-national (Kanagawa Prefectural)
Malaysia	2019	5	-
New Zealand	2018	8	1 national
Republic of Korea	2013	66	-
Singapore	2020	1	1 national
		158	5



Some of the advantages of being a member of the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities include:

- ❖ Connecting to and accessing knowledge, experience and expertise from a global community;
- ❖ Support from a global network of affiliates, practitioners, researchers, experts and advocates committed to fostering age-friendly environments;
- ❖ Recognition and visibility in the Network's activities and WHO's dedicated website - Age-friendly World- on which Members can present their activities, achievements and link back to their own website and resources;
- ❖ Access to the Network's branding and logo for use on activities related to your age-friendly journey;
- ❖ Opportunities for collaboration such as international research projects, joint publications, networking and sharing amongst each other etc.



Who can join the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities?

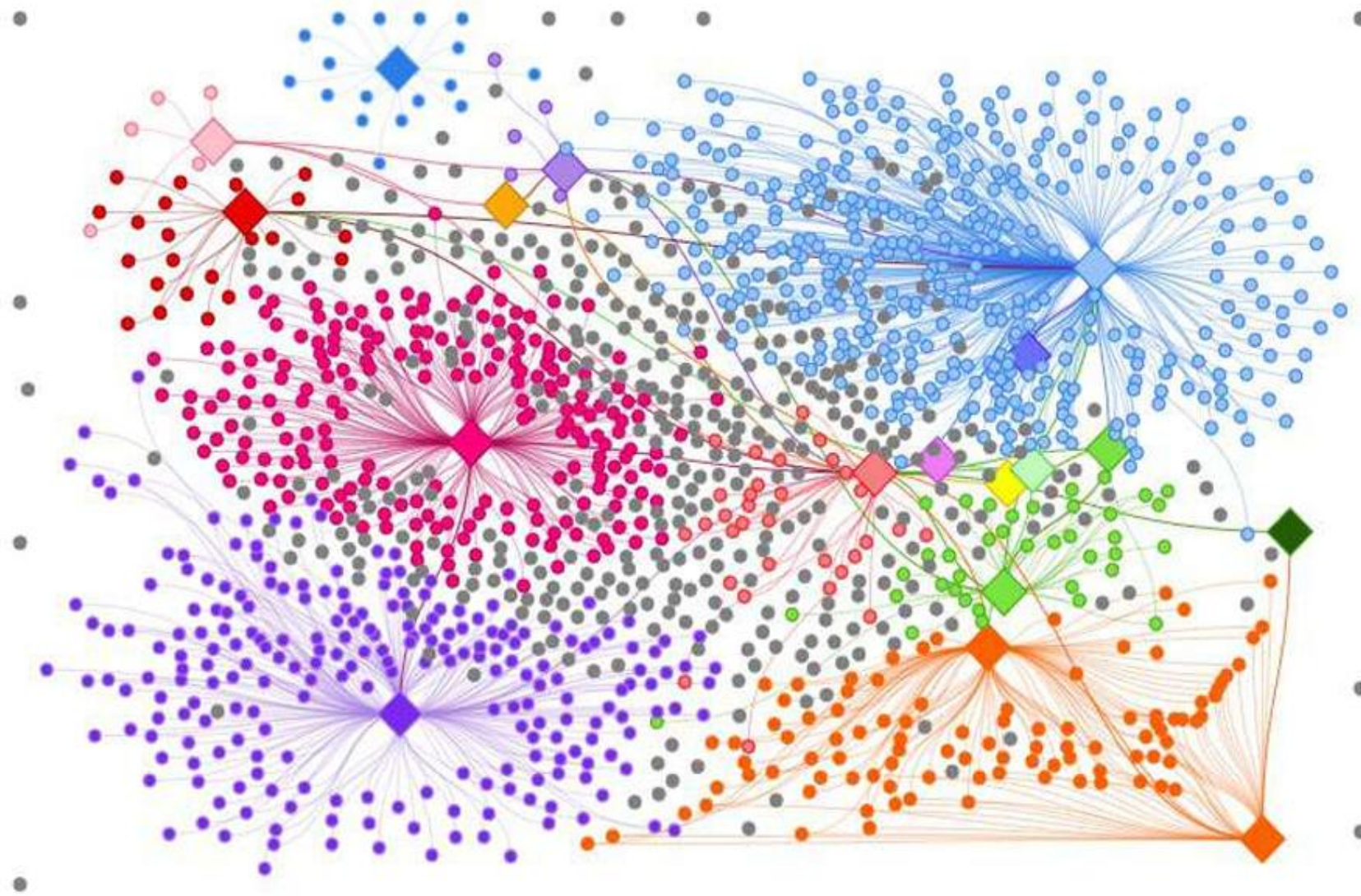
- ❖ Any city, community or sub national level of government : WHO's 194 member state. Apply directly on Age-Friendly World (FR, SP, EN).
- ❖ <https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/application-form/>

What does it take?

- ❖ Commitment from the highest political authority (e.g. Mayor)
- ❖ Use of a common methodology (engage, plan, implement and monitor)
- ❖ Sharing – including submission of one age-friendly practice annually



Fig. 10. Visual representation of the GNAFCC web of relations



Dots represent GNAFCC members and diamonds GNAFCC affiliates. Each community (i.e. affiliate and its members) is represented by a unique colour. Affiliates with members in common (e.g. a national and a subnational programme) form one community and are indicated in the same colour. Grey dots represent members not linked to any affiliate. Connections among members and names were omitted to facilitate visualization.


The Global Database of Age-friendly Practices features over 900 concrete activities implemented by Global Network members to make their communities better places to grow older.



Age-friendly World

[Home](#)[About](#)[WHO Global Network](#)[Age-Friendly in Practice](#)[Resource Library](#)

Search Results




Housing advisory service

We launched a new housing advisory service in 2022, which has proved very successful. We assist approximately 300 clients annually. Housing advisors assist all Vaasa residents or newcomers in need of housing advice. Many clients face challenging situations such as homelessness, rent arrears, or eviction. In the future, housing advisors will focus more on advising...

[Read more](#)

Started: 2022
Location: [Vaasa](#), Finland
Desired outcome for older people: Meet their basic needs
Sectors: Housing



Mappings of the accessibility of the outdoor environment

☒ Evaluated

During both the summer of 2020 and 2021 extensive mappings of the accessibility of the outdoor environment were conducted on a large area in different parts of the city.

The focus of the mappings was specifically on streets and crosswalks, pedestrian and bicycle lanes, as well as entrances of crucial public buildings. The mapping of the...

[Read more](#)

Started: 2021
Location: [Vaasa](#), Finland
Desired outcome for older people: Be mobile
Sectors: Health

Search and Filter Age-friendly Practices

Search

☐ Practices which have been evaluated

Filter by country

Filter by city/community

Filter by year started -

Population Size

Filter by proportion of population

Filter by sector

Filter by desired outcome for older people

Filter by issue

Filter by government level

Examples of age-friendly practices



Toronto HomeShare

 Evaluated

Older adults are a significant and growing population in Canadian cities, and currently represent 25% of the residents of most major cities in developed countries. Concurrent with national and international demographic changes are housing challenges, accelerated by increased costs associated with buying/maintaining homes, and compounded by long wait times for retirement homes, long-term care and...

[Read more](#)

Started: 2018
Location: [Toronto](#), Canada
Desired outcome for older people: Build and maintain relationships
Sectors: Health, Housing



Sirius Seniorbo – Creating Intergenerational Age-friendly Environments

The Municipality of Esbjerg is working with developers to integrate the planning of different neighborhoods to help support social interaction across generations.

We are currently building a new care center for older people centered in a local environment where citizens with special care needs can be embedded in the community and live next to families, children,...

[Read more](#)

Started: 2020
Location: [Municipality of Esbjerg Esbjerg Kommune](#), Denmark
Desired outcome for older people: Build and maintain relationships
Sectors: Housing, Long-term care, Social protection, Urban development



Cartago Accessible

The municipality of Cartago is dedicated to promoting the rights of older persons and persons with disabilities. To improve the accessibility of Cartago the municipality has built access ramps on the corners of 260 streets and avenues as well as installed guide tiles on sidewalks for people with visual impairments. Supported by free, easy, and...

[Read more](#)

Started: 2020
Location: [veronicahernandez](#), Costa Rica
Desired outcome for older people: Be mobile
Sectors: Urban development



Third Ramadan Gathering for Older People in Al-Dakhiliya Gove

In an atmosphere of warmth and celebration, the Al-Dakhiliya branch of Ihsan Association organized the Third Ramadan Gathering for Older People at Abu Jafer Farm, Bahla, with the participation of more than 450 older men and women.

The program included a wide range of educational, health, religious, and recreational activities designed to promote social connectedness and...

[Read more](#)

Started: 2023
Location: [Nizwa](#), Oman
Desired outcome for older people: Build and maintain relationships
Sectors: Health



Examples of age-friendly practices



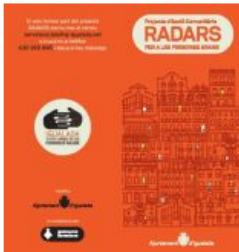
Age-friendly transport in Oslo

☒ Evaluated

Ruter age-friendly transport (RAT), also called “Pink bus”, is a door-to-door transport service with flexibility around travel time. It is a public transport service offered by the City Council of Oslo. RAT is available to customers aged 67 and up, but is especially aimed at those in the age group who have challenges using the...

[Read more](#)

Started: 2017
Location: Oslo, Norway
Desired outcome for older people: Be mobile
Sectors: Health, Transportation



Radars

Radars is a local network of prevention and detection of the solitude and isolation of the elderly, where residents, neighbors, traders, volunteers and services are involved in the different neighborhoods of Igualada.

This network is useful both for the elderly who live in this undesired situation, solitude, as well as for their relatives knowing that someone...

[Read more](#)

Started: 2017
Location: Igualada, Spain
Desired outcome for older people: Build and maintain relationships
Sectors: Social protection



Kanagawa Prefecture’s Efforts to Promote Bicycle Use

Kanagawa Bicycle Utilization Promotion Plan and Cycling Map

In Kanagawa Prefecture, the “Kanagawa Bicycle Utilization Promotion Plan” was developed in March 2020, taking into consideration the “Bicycle Utilization Promotion Plan” designed by the national government in June 2018 as well as opinions from prefectural residents. The Prefecture advocates the concept of “ME-BYO,” which refers to physical...

[Read more](#)

Started: 2020
Location: Kanagawa Prefectural Government, Japan
Desired outcome for older people: Be mobile
Sectors: Education, Health, Information and communication, Transportation, Urban



Ballet Posture “Les Seniors Mènent la Danse”

Les seniors ont été consultés en 2022 par le biais d’un questionnaire puis lors de 16 ateliers Fabrique d’Initiatives Locales (FIL). Ces ateliers avaient pour objectif d’améliorer les animations et les activités proposées par la Mission Seniors. Il a été demandé aux seniors de donner leurs avis sur ce qu’ils voudraient faire et voir évoluer...

[Read more](#)

Started: 2024
Location: Ville de Dunkerque, France
Desired outcome for older people: Be mobile
Sectors: Other



Examples of age-friendly practices



Laboratório de Inovação Social do Porto (Porto's Social Innovation Lab)

The Laboratório de Inovação Social aims to promote collaborative experimentation with new solutions to social problems in the city of Porto. Starting from a policy of failing fast and well, it proposes to develop a model of structured experimentation – based on processes and methodologies of impact, and on promoting the spill-over of the knowledge...

[Read more](#)

Started: 2023

Location: [Porto](#), Portugal

Desired outcome for older people: Contribute

Sectors: Information and communication



Age-friendly Transportation and Community Design Workshop

☒ [Evaluated](#)

The Caritas Mok Cheung Sui Kun Community Centre organised the “Age-friendly Transportation and Community Design Workshop”. The programme was co-organised by the Central & Western District Council Working Group on Elderly Service, the Caritas Elderly Centre – Central District, and the Caritas Community Centre – Caine Road.

This programme invited 20 core members from the aforementioned...

[Read more](#)

Started: 2018

Location: [Central and Western District](#), China

Desired outcome for older people: Meet their basic needs

Sectors: Transportation, Urban development



Taff Ely Frailty Nurse Service – Community Engagement

☒ [Evaluated](#)

Frailty is not an inevitable part of ageing. Without intervention, frailty can result in hospitalisation, dependence, and early transitions into care homes. The Frailty Nursing Service offers proactive, community-based support to detect frailty early, improve wellbeing, and reduce avoidable care escalation. By engaging directly with sheltered accommodation residents, the service reaches vulnerable older people who...

[Read more](#)

Started: 2024

Location: [Rhondda Cynon Taf](#), Wales

Desired outcome for older people: Be mobile

Sectors: Health



Urbanage

In a context of demographic change and urbanisation, the European Horizon 2020 project “URBANAGE” is aiming at creating a digital ecosystem to foster inclusive short- and long-term decision-making in the field of urban planning. The platform URBANAGE will make it easier for urban planners, decision and policy makers, and older adults to better co-design and...

[Read more](#)

Started: 2021

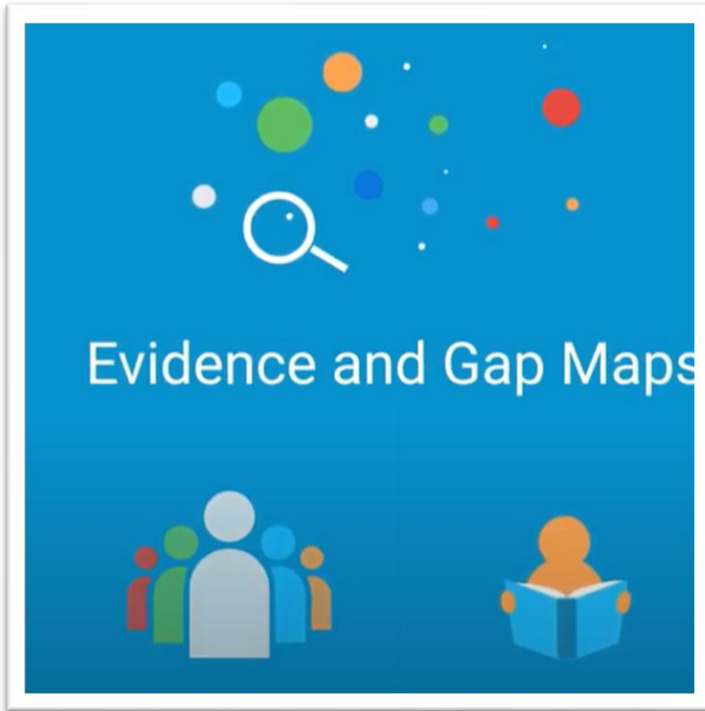
Location: [AGE Platform Europe](#), International

Desired outcome for older people: Learn, grow and make decisions

Sectors: Urban development



Evidence-to-action architecture for AFE



Improve the knowledge base, starting with a better understanding and systematizing of what we already have through e.g. reviews and EGM's



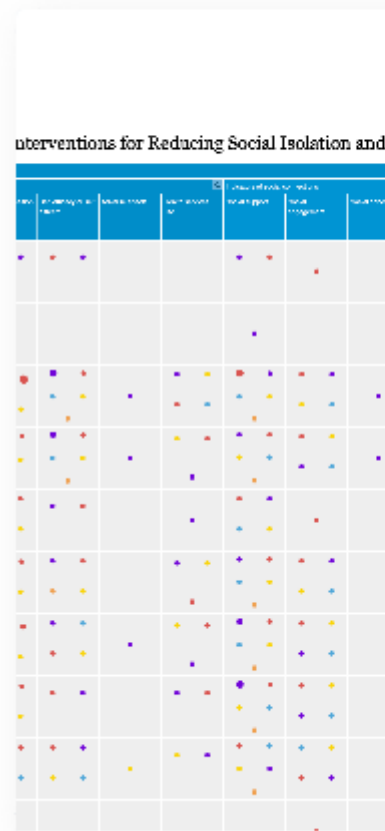
Bring knowledge and action closer together to improve the quality of both and reduce inefficiencies in the allocation of scarce resources through e.g. Knowledge and Action hubs



Improve global coordination on AFE evidence-to-action through e.g. activities to generate demand for evidence, research agenda setting, grand challenges, training for use of evidence etc

WHO Evidence and Gap Maps and Mega-maps for the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing

Evidence and gap maps

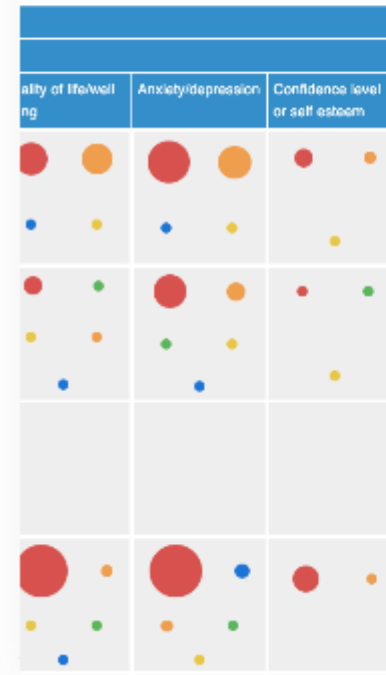


Evidence and gap map on in-person interventions for reducing social isolation and loneliness (all ages)

30 July 2023

[Access](#)

Interventions for Reducing Social Isolation and Loneliness in Older Adults



Evidence and gap map on digital interventions for reducing social isolation and loneliness in older adults

23 November 2022

[Access](#)

Bring knowledge and action closer together



World Health
Organization



WHO Global Network
for Age-friendly Cities
and Communities



Decade
of healthy
ageing

Age-friendly Environments Knowledge and Action Hubs



Statement from the Greater Manchester 2025 Age-Friendly Futures Summit:

*'Advancing, leading and creating
city regions and communities for
an age-friendly world'*

Summit statement

Call to action

To address the above objectives, Summit delegates committed to initiating and developing a Global Age-Friendly Futures Research Network. The network is open to all researchers interested in advancing, leading and creating Age-Friendly futures. To keep in touch, **sign up here.**

[Age friendly Futures – Summit Statement |
Centre for Ageing Better](#)



WHO Global Network
for Age-friendly Cities
and Communities





20 Encuentro Latinoamericano

de Ciudades y Comunidades Amigables con las Personas Mayores



Red Mundial de la OMS
de Ciudades y Comunidades
Amigables con las Personas Mayores



**Age-Friendly Futures Summit: Advancing,
leading and creating city regions and
communities for an age-friendly world. 25-
27 March 2025**

Get in touch to receive a registration link



Feedback

This dynamic three-day summit will host a series of meetings bringing together around 200 leaders, policymakers, practitioners and researchers, from the UK and around the globe, to advance the creation of an age-friendly world.



World Health
Organization

European Region



Bizkaia

nagusi intelligence center

Leadership Course on Ageing is Living:

Unlocking the Potential of Population Ageing

Leadership Course

11 March 2025

Bizkaia

9:30 - 17:00 (CET)



Training program: Age-friendly environments

[VERSIÓN ESPAÑOL](#)[ENGLISH VERSION](#)[VERSÃO PORTUGUESA](#)

Introduction

The WHO Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities has grown consistently in the last few years, particularly in the Region of the Americas, which comprises more than half of the active members of the Network. Within this framework, the cities and communities interested in joining the Network and the members require specific tools to strengthen their local programs and participation in the Network. This course addresses healthy aging and the importance of environments to promote it, especially through the creation of age-friendly environments, considering their characteristics and through concrete actions that seek to transform the local context where people live and age. This encourages cities and communities to develop age-friendly strategies and promotes knowledge exchange among Network members.

Purpose

This course aims to provide people and organizations with the tools to develop and implement initiatives to create age-friendly environments.

Goals

- Gaining knowledge on healthy aging and the most relevant conceptual frameworks.
- Increasing awareness of the importance of environments to promote healthy aging.
- Acquiring specific skills to engage in the city or community by designing strategies to create age-friendly environments.



Action Area 2: Age-friendly Environments

WHO Proposed Focus (2026-2027)

- **Support the sustainable expansion** of WHO's Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities (included in the WHO Investment Case as a key action to address health determinants over the next 4 years)
- **Strengthen training and mentoring opportunities** for local and national age-friendly programs as well as for practitioners in health and other sectors
- **Map and disseminate evidence on effective interventions** to create age-friendly environments, and foster knowledge translation with policymakers and practitioners
- Support the organization of the **3rd World Congress of Age-friendly Cities and Communities** (June 2026, Spain)



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Is your city or community part of the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities?



Want to know more?
Subscribe to our Newsletter!

SAVE THE DATE!


3rd World Congress of Age-friendly Cities and Communities

16–18 June 2026

Donostia/San Sebastián, Spain





A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a small, fluffy, dark brown chick. The chick has a long, pink beak and is looking towards the camera. The background is a plain, light gray.

Kia ora rawa atu!
Thank you!



**World Health
Organization**



**WHO Global Network
for Age-friendly Cities
and Communities**



**Decade
of healthy
ageing**



Age-friendly Aotearoa New Zealand

Tessa Madden,
Programme Lead, Office for Seniors



Office for Seniors
Te Tari Kaumātua



Supporting Communities

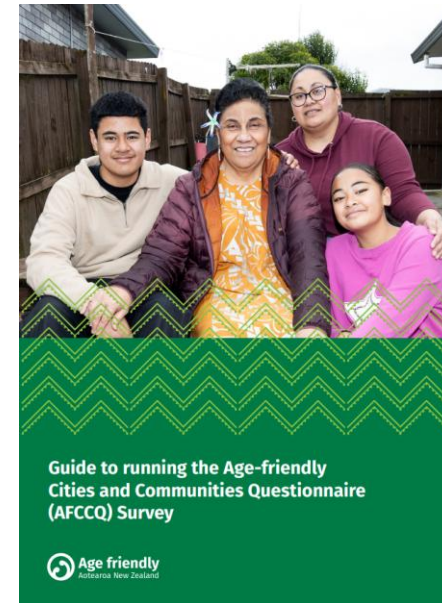
Affiliates promote age-friendly environments, facilitate knowledge exchange, and support local cities and communities to become more age-friendly



**Age friendly Aotearoa
New Zealand Toolkit**



**Age friendly
Urban places**



**Guide to running the Age-friendly
Cities and Communities Questionnaire
(AFCCQ) Survey**



2019-present

Better Later Life – He Oranga Kaumātua

National strategy with a commitment to implementing an age-friendly approach



Achieving financial security and economic participation



Promoting healthy ageing and improving access to services



Creating diverse housing choices and options



Enhancing opportunities for participation and social connection



Making environments accessible



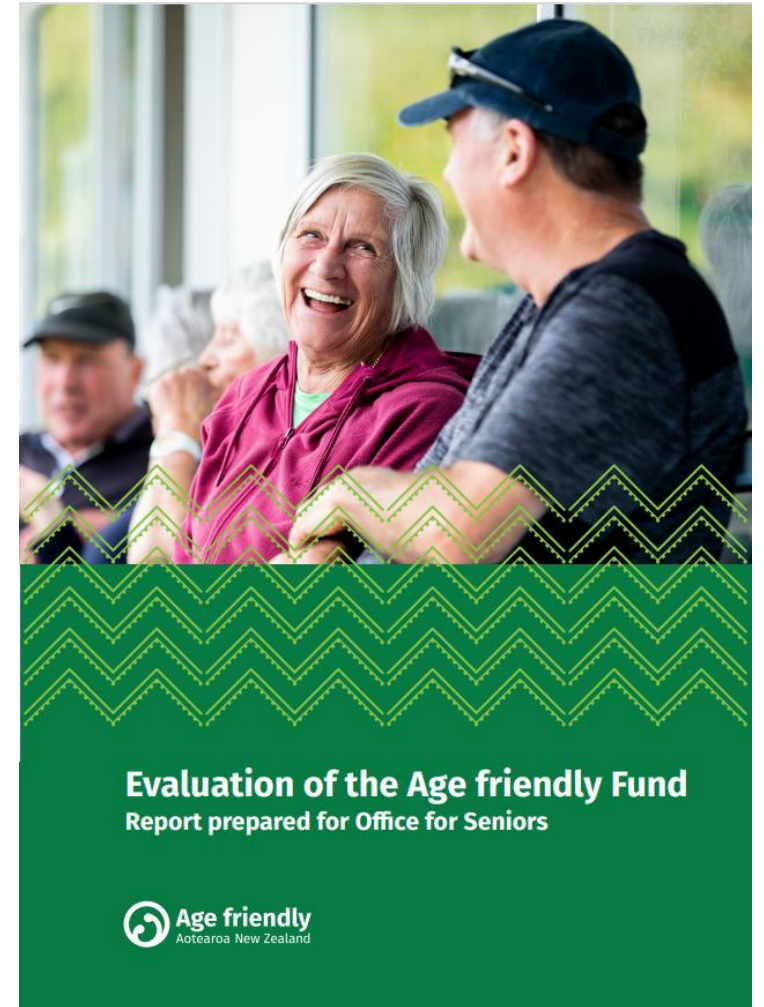
2018-present

Age-friendly Fund

Small grants programme to support communities to develop age friendly plans or implement age friendly initiatives

An independent evaluation:

- found the programme empowered communities to design and deliver locally relevant initiatives
- highlighted opportunities for continual improvement



2021-present

Age-friendly Network

Aims to strengthen the support available for local organisations leading plans to improve the wellbeing of older people

- Support through a community of practice
- Membership is at 36 councils and community organisations
- Eight councils are members of the WHO Global Network

