



## Membership in the Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC)

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### 1. The Vision, Mission and Guiding Document of the GNAFCC

While national governments are largely responsible for creating policies and strategies for healthy and active ageing<sup>1</sup>, lasting change requires commitment at all levels of government. An age-friendly world will be built community by community, city by city, region by region.

The **vision** of the GNAFCC is that every city and community strives to become increasingly age-friendly.

Creating age-friendly environments requires a process across the life course that progressively improves the fit between people's needs and the environments in which they live. To achieve this a coordinated response is required across many stakeholders, sectors and multiple levels of government. An age-friendly city or community is a place in which people want to grow older. Age-friendly cities and communities foster healthy and active ageing. They enable older people to: age safely in a place that is right for them; be free from poverty; continue to develop personally; and to contribute to their communities while retaining autonomy and dignity. Because older people know best what they need, they are at the centre of any effort by local governments to create a more age-friendly community.

The **mission** of the GNAFCC is to stimulate and enable cities and communities around the world to become increasingly age-friendly. The Network seeks to do this by:

- **inspiring** change by showing what can be done and how it can be done
- **connecting** cities and communities worldwide to facilitate the exchange of information, knowledge and experience
- **supporting** cities and communities to find appropriate **innovative and evidence-based solutions**

The GNAFCC is governed by **five guiding documents**:

- Global strategy and action plan on ageing and health <http://www.who.int/ageing/global-strategy/en/>

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<sup>1</sup> In 2002 WHO released *Active ageing: a policy framework*. The *Global age-friendly cities: a guide* built on this framework. In 2015, WHO's issued a new framework for *Healthy Ageing* which has since been endorsed by 194 Member States and forms the basis of *WHO's Global Strategy and Action Plan on Ageing and Health (2016 – 2030)*. WHO's new approach compliments our past approach by framing age-friendly actions towards meeting the goal of enhancing functional ability and by extending these concepts in a way that is relevant for all sectors and that can encourage them to work together.

- World report on ageing and health <http://www.who.int/ageing/events/world-report-2015-launch/en/>
- AFEE policy tool and related guidelines <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/Life-stages/healthy-ageing/activities/age-friendly-environments-in-europe-afee>
- Measuring the age-friendliness of cities: a guide to using core indicators [http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/203830/1/9789241509695\\_eng.pdf](http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/203830/1/9789241509695_eng.pdf)
- Global age-friendly cities: a guide [http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/age\\_friendly\\_cities\\_guide/en/](http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/age_friendly_cities_guide/en/)

## 2. Membership Eligibility and Advantages

### An eligible member:

- Is located in a WHO member state
- Is a directly elected or mandated public governing body possessing within a given territory, as defined by law, a set of competences to deliver public goods and services to citizens. Given the diverse allocation of responsibility for health policy and community planning among countries, membership is inclusive of sub-national organizational levels from the provincial or state level, to villages and townships with limited population numbers.
- Has the authority and capacity to convene mechanisms for inter-sectoral collaboration, conduct baseline assessments and to develop, implement and monitor action plans aimed at making the cities and communities under their sphere of influence more age-friendly.

The **advantages of being a member of the WHO GNAFCC** include

- **Access** to information sharing with 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
- **Opportunities for collaboration** such as international research projects, joint publications, networking and sharing amongst each other etc.

## 3. Membership Requirements

To become a member of the Network, cities and communities must

### ***a) Share and promote the values and principles***

.... that are central to the WHO AFC approach:

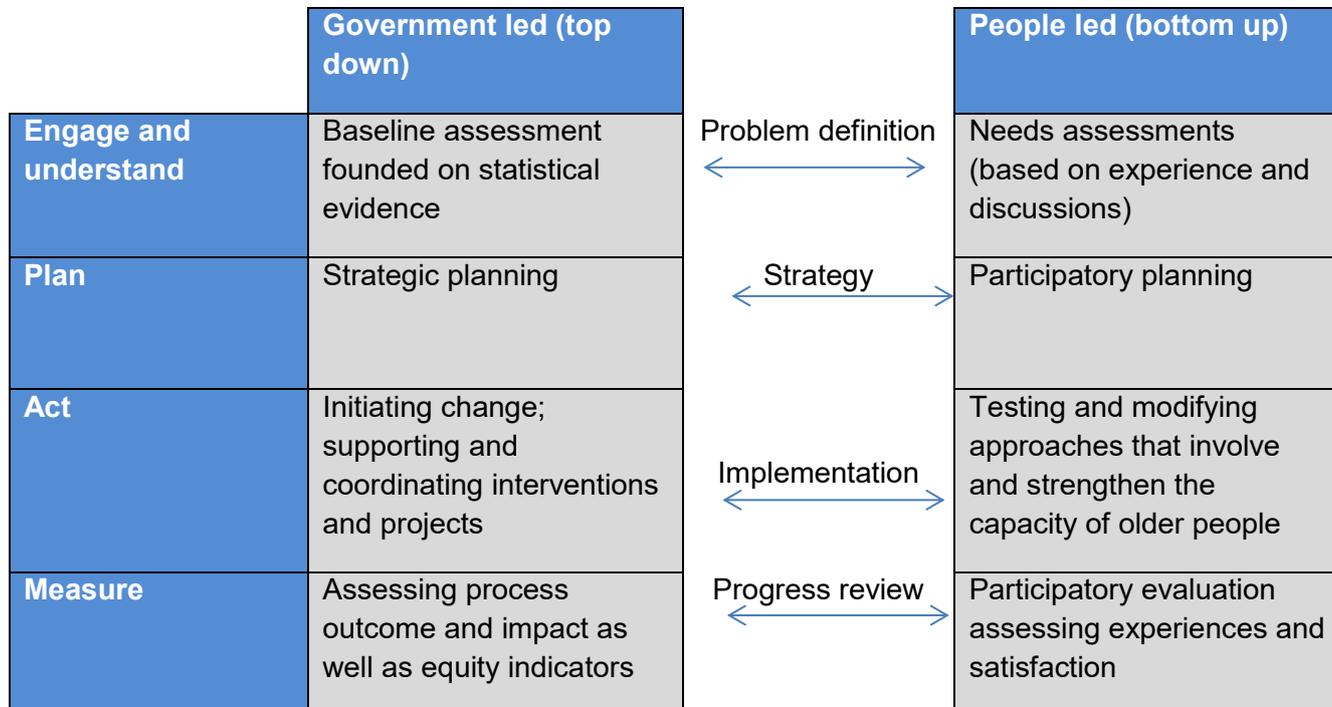
- **Respect for diversity:** Older people are a heterogeneous group with diverse capacities, resources, life-styles and preferences that should be respected

- **Equity:** Inequities between groups (including but not limited to age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, religion/ beliefs, rural/urban) should be identified and addressed.
- The **participation** of older people in all spheres of life and their **contributions** should be **valued** and fostered
- The **rights** of older people should be respected so that they may age and die with dignity<sup>2</sup>

...and to the process of creating more age-friendly cities and communities:

- **Co-design and co-creation.** Creating an age-friendly city or community requires collaboration and coordination across sectors and with diverse stakeholders. One of the essential conditions toward creating age-friendly cities and communities is the meaningful involvement of older people at all stages: setting the agenda , as well as the development, implementation and evaluation of age friendly actions. Older people are not only beneficiaries but crucial agents of change.
- A **bottom-up** participatory approach should be **combined with top-down** political commitment and resources (see figure 1).
- A **life-course** approach that encourages **inter-generational relations, solidarity** and mutual support should be central to efforts to create age-friendly cities and communities

**Figure 1 Middle out - combining bottom up and top down approaches.**

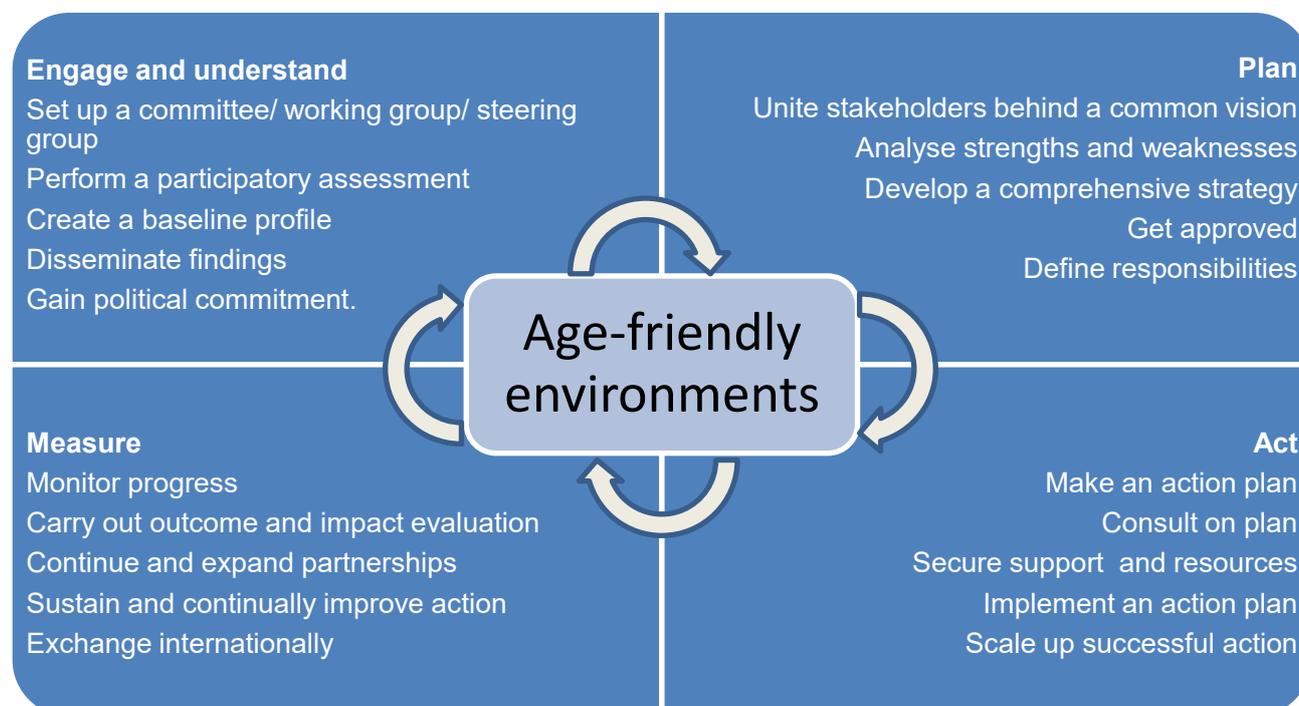


<sup>2</sup> Legal provisions regulating end of life vary from country to country.

**b) Commit to and implement the four steps to create age-friendly local environments (see figure 2):**

- **Engage and understand:** Engaging stakeholders including older people, incorporating also those that are isolated or hard to reach, to understand their needs and preferences and the existing barriers and opportunities for healthy and active ageing is key to ensuring efforts to become more age-friendly respond to local need and priorities (*Outcome:* participatory age-friendly assessment)
- **Plan:** Planning strategically enables all stakeholders to develop a shared vision, to agree on the priorities for action and to plan and resource how the city or community will tackle these challenges. (*Outcome:* Action plan)
- **Act:** Implementing the Action plan is at the heart of creating an age-friendly city or community. The Guide to creating age friendly cities and the AFEE Handbook list many possible actions. (*Outcome:* Age-friendly practices )
- **Measure:** Collecting evidence on both the progress of implementing the age-friendly approach as well as its impact on people lives is crucial to the success and sustainability of a city or communities' efforts to become increasingly age-friendly. Monitoring and evaluating progress will help to identify successes and challenges, provide results that can be communicated to local stakeholders, and serve as the basis for defining priorities for future action. (*Outcome:* Monitoring and evaluation reports)

**Figure 2 Steps to creating age-friendly environments.** The age-friendly journey requires a continuous process of improvement that tends to be in the direction of the arrows. Members can join at any step. The different steps together take on average five years to execute.



### ***c) Actively participate in the GNAFCC***

Member activities will be diverse and tailored to the needs and level of interest of Network members.

#### *Mandatory requirements of Members:*

- Contribute to the development of knowledge by sharing evidence of progress (assessment reports, action plans, and monitoring and evaluation reports) with other members.
- Share age-friendly practices.
- Share guidelines and tools with other members.
- Ensure their profile page remains updated.

#### *Members may also choose to*

- Organize meetings for Network members at the level of Government they are working (e.g. local, regional etc.) and in cooperation with existing Affiliates for other levels.
- Organize or participate in webinars organized by the Network
- Participate in mentor-mentee relationships, either formal or informal, with other Network members
- Share recent age-friendly activities and events with the Network
- Share opportunities for collaboration

### **4. Application process:**

The application process for all sub-national authorities wishing to join the Network requires the following:

- Completion of the online application form (See Appendix 1 –Member Application Form).
- A letter from the leadership e.g. Mayor or public administration indicating formal commitment to becoming more age-friendly. The letter is essential as it requires a high level of political commitment and engagement to steer a community, cities or regional journey to becoming more age-friendly.
- Confirmation that the applicant agrees with the WHO values and approach to creating age-friendly cities and communities and have the human resource and financial capacity to implement the WHO age-friendly city and community approach and actively participate in the Network.
- Designation of a contact person for the Network to facilitate communication and exchange. The contact person must ensure that all communication with WHO about assessments, plans and results has been consulted on with relevant stakeholders and approved by the local administration.

### **5. Review of applications and decisions on new members**

Applications are reviewed by the WHO designated Network Admissions Officer on a rolling basis and evaluated against the above admissions criteria. The Network Admissions Officer may be a staff at WHO Headquarters, a WHO Regional Office, or within a GNAFCC Affiliate as agreed by WHO for each country. Applicants may be contacted by the Network Admissions Officer to provide further information should their application not meet criteria or aspects of the application be unclear.

Applicants may also be “fast-tracked” for admission to the GNAFCC if they are already part of an existing age-friendly or another transnational city network that has vision, principles and values consistent with the GNAFCC.

Decisions on membership will be communicated to the designated contact person through a letter to the leadership.

An overview of the admissions process is given in figure 3. New members will have an automatically generated membership certificate. The certificate indicates that the member has embarked on the process to become more age-friendly and not a certificate of achievement or recognition by the WHO.

Members of the GNAFCC shall not purport to speak on behalf of, or otherwise represent, the WHO to any third party.

## 6. Termination of membership

Network membership is continual except in the following circumstances:

1. *The member requests that their membership be terminated*, after which they will be removed from the list of members and their profile page will no longer appear on the Age-Friendly World website. The contact person’s user account will however not be deactivated enabling them to remain connected to the Network and re-engage at any time.
2. The city or community, over a period of three years, has not met the mandatory membership requirements listed under 3.c.
3. Membership may be withdrawn by the decision of the Network Secretariat, in consultation with the relevant Affiliates and governing bodies due to non-respect of these terms of reference or related WHO terms of reference..

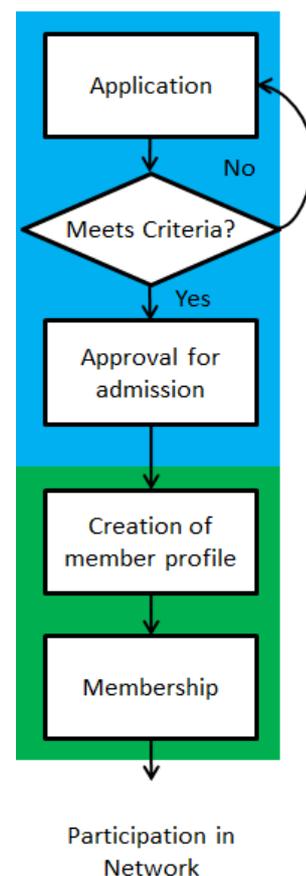


Figure 3 Admissions process

## Appendix 1: Key Elements of the on-line Member Application Form

- **Name of community/city or other subnational authority**
- **Name of leadership of city, community or other subnational authority and contact information**
- **Main focal point and contact information**
- **Whether application is through any affiliate and if so to specify the affiliate’s name.**
- **Population per age groups**

- **Country of location**
- **Description of age-friendly activities in place or planned.**
- **Engagement of older people**
- **Cross-sectoral collaboration**

**Attachments:**

- **Photo for the profile page**
- **Letter from Mayor or subnational public authority leadership**
- **Any existing assessments, action- plans, etc.**