

Key steps for developing national programmes for age-friendly cities and communities

This document summarizes the key steps to consider while creating or strengthening a national programme for age-friendly cities and communities (AFCC). These key steps include all relevant aspects of the process of developing such national programmes and should be considered in the context of the WHO publication *National programmes for age-friendly cities and communities: a guide*. Full details of these key steps as well as a broader implementation framework to can be found in the guide, together with examples of how to meaningfully engage older people and practical lessons from the field.

The key steps provided in this document and the guide can support those responsible for or involved in developing and sustaining national programmes for AFCC. This document can also be used as a tool to guide a country's self-assessment on their readiness for AFCC programmes, as well as to track progress. The framework linked to these key steps is also adaptable for the development or strengthening of AFCC programmes at the sub-national level (e.g. provinces, states, regions).

➤ Key steps for partnerships, networking and stakeholders

- ✓ Identify and characterize stakeholders who are already creating more age-friendly environments at all levels and sectors of government.
- Understand the nature and strength of relations among stakeholders and existing partnerships.
- Develop and support partnerships within government and among stakeholders, from local to national and international levels.
- Use a whole-of-government approach, and ensure both vertical (across government) and horizontal (across sectors) integration.
- Act in accordance with the complexity of cities and communities and governance structures rather than using a rigid, hierarchical approach.

- ☑ Identify a facilitating agency or actor to drive, coordinate and manage the process, which may be outside national or subnational governments but still be accountable to them.
- ☑ Negotiate and establish roles, responsibilities and accountability within the government.

➤ Key steps for leadership and strategic thinking

- Ensure common understanding of AFCC among sectors and a shared vision or common purpose.
- ☑ Identify shared goals and opportunities for collaboration among sectors.
- Include age-friendly environment considerations in related national city and community development plans.







- Use national enabling and convening power to bring together governments and sectors to better understand overlapping policies, positions, values and experiences.
- Foster a culture of trust and shared accountability from strategic to operational levels.
- Ensure collaborative leadership that requires, enables and rewards the sharing of power, control and resources.
- Identify and promote AFCC leaders from different backgrounds, spheres of influence or positions within and outside governments.
- Advocate for AFCC to leadership at all levels, including internationally, and highlight early success in collaborations, giving visibility and recognition to all involved and creating a space for them to demonstrate their involvement and commitment.
- Secure informal and formal support from high-level politicians or champions to gain momentum and promote an age-friendly agenda.
- ☑ If absent or insufficient, develop a formal mandate and secure a governmental position for AFCC.
- Strengthen strategic thinking to understand what requires adaptation, changing what does not work and allowing innovation.

➤ Key steps for human, financial, institutional and cultural resources

- Ensure dedicated human and financial resources for a national AFCC programme, with a dedicated budget for each type of resource.
- Build on and mobilize mapped institutional, cultural and societal resources to advocate for and implement action for AFCC.
- Map and influence the national budget to facilitate multisectoral collaboration and avoid fragmentation.

- Make use of the people-centred aim of the AFCC agenda to negotiate budgeting and accountability among sectors, highlighting the societal gains of joint action.
- Improve capacity to estimate the potential economic, health and well-being impacts of AFCC interventions, thus improving the case for further investment.
- Ensure that resources are directed at the right issues and problems, at the right levels and intensities and at the right people and institutions through legal, fiscal and financial mechanisms.
- Match available resources to the priorities in each AFCC domain and selected activities to be carried forward.
- Dedicate resources to hiring and training direct and indirect AFCC staff according to the priorities and available resources.

▷ Key steps for capacity-building

- Create the conditions for staff and practitioners to develop new or refine processes and view government business and activities towards AFCC differently.
- Develop AFCC-relevant knowledge, skills, capabilities and practice for programme staff and the broader community.
- Develop the capability necessary for successful multisectoral activities, programmes and initiatives.
- Build capacity for combating ageism within governments and among stakeholders, including selfdirected ageism.
- Ensure that the technical expertise required for each activity and function is available, either among programme staff or through partnerships.
- Foster exchanges among cities and communities within and outside the country through initiatives for peer-to-peer exchange, mentoring and sharing knowledge, good practices and lessons.

- Enable local AFCC programmes to foster learning and exchange among their own communities and groups.
- Develop and establish opportunities for cross-sectoral learning, peer support and joint problem-solving.

⋉ Key steps for knowledge, research and innovation

- ☑ Collect, compile and share appropriate knowledge to design action to strengthen appropriate research and innovation on AFCC.
- Embrace, advocate for and encourage co-research with older people, including those in marginalized groups, ensuring their meaningful engagement in knowledge production.
- Fund or influence allocation of funds and resources for research relevant to AFCC.
- Promote joint research and scientific exchange among relevant national and international institutions, including AFCC programmes.
- Create mechanisms and partnerships to facilitate academic evaluation of collaborative research, practice and policy for AFCC.
- ✓ Initiate and support the development of a national research agenda for AFCC, and use regional and global efforts for research prioritization that are relevant for AFCC.
- ☑ Foster innovation in both soft and hard technology, including in collaboration with communities and the private sector.

➤ Key steps for monitoring and evaluation

Assess the country's readiness in relation to several critical factors for M&E (organization, responsibilities, capabilities, incentives and demand for such a system).

- Develop or support development of an M&E plan to generate, analyse and use relevant, accurate, timely, affordable information from various sources for monitoring progress and impact in action areas nationally and subnationally.
- ☑ Create or strengthen M&E systems for AFCC programmes, building on existing guidance and structures.
- When possible, ensure alignment of local, national and global M&E frameworks.
- Encourage and guide data prioritization to produce a minimum set of data on inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts that can be used for comparisons, standardized monitoring and review, and scaling up interventions.
- Develop or support development of harmonized methods for collection, collation, analysis and reporting of disaggregated data in all sectors.
- Ensure appropriate disaggregation of data by age, gender, disability, degree of urbanization and locally relevant strata of inequality.
- Advocate for and ensure that data and information are regularly analysed, published and otherwise made publicly available.

