

The Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities

Looking back over the last decade, looking forward to the next





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PREFACE

In 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) united the world on 17 ambitious objectives that seek to make the world a better place for everyone between now and 2030. In line with the SDGs, the *Global strategy and action plan on ageing and health* listed five key strategic objectives on which we need to take action in order to improve the ability of older people to be and do what they have reason to value.

Helping cities and communities everywhere to become age-friendly is critical if we want to achieve the SDGs and the *Global Strategy*. By making cities and communities age-friendly, we ensure that cities and communities are inclusive and equitable places that leave no one behind – especially the most vulnerable older people. Equitable societies, in turn, have benefits for everyone.

No government or ministry can achieve these outcomes working in isolation. It takes the whole community, working together to make environments age-friendly, harnessing innovation and imagination from all sectors and all actors. Initiatives must partner within communities, but we also can learn across communities. A global network of cities and communities can help to catalyze progress by providing the inspiration and support that can inspire change and motivate action in creative ways – ways that don't have to be costly.

This report gives a global overview of the progress that cities and communities have made over the last decade towards becoming more age-friendly, through the lens of the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities. Among the notable achievements, membership in the WHO Global Network has increased four-fold in the last two and a half years and more affiliate organizations are supporting the Network in its mission than ever before. These outcomes highlight the recognition around the world, of the importance of WHO's systematic and inclusive approach to becoming more age-friendly, through political commitment, planning, action, and evaluation. This approach, which can be flexible, can have a huge impact - Through the examples provided in the report from cities and communities around the world, we can see the concrete ways that these initiatives benefit older people in their everyday lives.

We are very proud of the work done by all those within the Network over the last decade, and with this report we look with optimism at the next decade to come.

Dr John Beard
Director, Department of Ageing and Life Course
World Health Organization

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