



Report of
1st International Conference on Age Friendly Cities
Building the WHO Global Network

28th – 30th September 2011
Dublin, Ireland

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I. Introduction

1. Themes / Objectives
 - a. Strengthen the WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities by:
 - i. Securing the attendance of a broad range of senior managers from municipal authorities across the world, including those not yet involved with the WHO Global Network of Age Friendly Cities
 - ii. Creating meaningful opportunities for participants to meet and forge working relationships with people from other age-friendly city initiatives
 - iii. Agreeing the principles, priorities and modus operandi of the WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities
 - b. Advance thinking and approaches on how to make cities more age-friendly by:
 - i. Providing useful presentations, case-studies, guidelines another materials from leading edge thinkers and leaders of successful initiatives
 - ii. Considering models of how to address commonly shared challenges on the specific elements of the WHO Age-friendly approach (e.g. transport) and on implementing Age-friendly Cities programmes (e.g. formal recognition, accreditation, benchmarking)
 - iii. Securing mayoral 'sign up' to the Dublin Declaration setting out the Principles of Age-friendly Cities.
2. Programmes (Appendix 1)
 - a. There are three main themes:
 - i. Social and Cultural Connectivity
 - ii. Built Environment
 - iii. Building Momentum for the WHO Global Age-friendly Cities initiative
 - b. Workshop and Programmes were organized under each theme.
 - c. Field visits to three counties in Ireland were arranged.

II. Evaluation

1. **Networking**
 - a. The opportunity to network and meet new contacts was consistently highlighted as the most beneficial aspect of the conference.
 - b. The conference networking forged the development of new partnerships
 - c. The way round tables were organized in order to meet new people on different days and we could have discussions and full participation.
2. **Learning from International Counterparts**
 - a. We could meet new contacts and learning from the experiences of other cities.
 - b. The opportunity to see what age friendly initiatives being piloted in different countries and cultures around the world.
 - c. Interesting mix of people and the opportunity to acquire relevant information from intellectual participants with diverse backgrounds, disciplines and age groups.
 - d. The opportunity to learn new strategies to adapt to older cities.
 - e. The opportunity to hear more about AFC initiatives at the international level and see examples of how age- friendliness is being incorporated in various places.

3. **Speakers**

- a. Renowned and quality speakers delivered insightful and informative content in their presentations.

4. **Signing of Dublin Declaration**

- a. The signing of the **Dublin Declaration on Age-Friendly Cities** is part of the Age-Friendly Cities Conference which is taking place in Dublin (28th – 30th September), giving global recognition to Ireland's lead on this issue. The link to the Declaration is below: <http://www.afc-internationalconference.ie/templates/afc/images/Dublin%20Declaration.pdf>
- b. The Dublin Declaration was signed on 28th September at Dublin City Hall. Over 40 cities from across the world showed their commitment in creating age-friendly cities. Cities which have signed the Dublin Declaration including Akita (Japan), Alfandega da Fe (Portugal), Bern (Switzerland), Besancon (France), Cape Town (South Africa), Cavan (Ireland), Chia-Yi City (Taiwan), Clare (Ireland), Dijon (France), Dublin (Ireland), Fingal (Ireland), Galway (Ireland), Kildare (Ireland), Kilkenny (Ireland), Krakow (Poland), La Plata (Argentina), Ljubljana (Slovakia), Louth (Ireland), Lyon (France), Manchester (England), Meath (Ireland), Mexico City (Mexico), Monaghan (Ireland), New York (USA), Oakland (USA), Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), Rosario (Argentina), Seoul (South Korea), Udine (Italy), Westmeath (Ireland) and more is coming.
- c. The aspiration behind this Declaration is that the needs of older persons will be integrated in a larger extent into all aspects of town and city planning. It is a commitment to improve the life quality for the older persons and facilitate them to continue to be the active members of society as they grow older. Cities which signed the Declaration have declared they will work to meet actions based on the WHO Global Age-Friendly Cities Guide.
- d. The core principles of the Declaration can be summarized as below:
 - Awareness of older people, their rights, their needs, their potentials
 - Developing citizen centred processes
 - Develop urban and other public places that are inclusive
 - Include housing for older people that is of the highest quality
 - Public transport systems available to older people
 - Promote the participation of older people in social and cultural life
 - Promote and support the development of employment and volunteering opportunities
 - Ensure support and health services are available to older people
- e. Dublin Declaration is of much importance, and it seems that the Declaration can serve as yet another important step in developing the Age-Friendly Cities in the future.

5. **Limited focus**

- a. For some, the scope of the conference was limited to the urban environment (ignoring rural locations) and a narrow definition of ageing, which ignored ethnic minorities and the poor. Others were disappointed that more time was not spent on ageing in developing nations.

III. Observations during the field visits

A. Name of the county :Kildare (September 30, 2011. 2:00-8:00 p.m.)

1. Na's na Riogh Housing Association (NNRHA) Project , situated at Naas Kildare. This project which started since 2000, to provide sheltered housing for old people and provide on-site intergeneration facilities and activities. The project includes sheltered Housing for old person, community Centre with intergeneration facilities and Arts & Cultural centre.
 - a. Sheltered Housing – promote independent living, managed by full time manager
 - 53 self contained apartments with one bedroom, kitchen, sitting room, bathroom with level access shower and internet
 - situated in the heart of the town, easy access to shop, church, post office and the community.
 - priority will be given to those living in Naas and the surrounding area
 - b. The Naas Community Centre: opened in July 2011
 - redevelopment of the old parish centre to a modern community centre on three floors with wheelchair access
 - designed to provide conference room, activity room, counselling room, catering kitchen
 - serving the whole county; around 30 different groups meeting weekly
 - c. The Cultural and Arts Centre
 - restoration of the nuns' chapel to provide a venue for classical, mulit-cultural music , dance and art activities for the community groups
 - d. Interactive garden
 - provide intergenerational communication platform, retirees and students from secondary school and primary school joined together through story telling and gardening.
 - e. Impression toward the project:
 - well planned intergenerational project- the young and old are integrated through arts, crafts and story telling activities.
 - the project which invited the members of the community, enable their mutual understanding and interaction between all generation.
 - The Shelterd housing provide an independent living for the aged and helped them to integrate with the community with easy access to the community facilities. They are cared by the community and contributed to the community also.
2. Luisne-Dawn's Light is a project we visited in Kildare,Dublin., which is the first intergenerational community art project undertaken by N'as ne Riogh Housing Association.
 - a. The project is developing an old convent in the centre of the town as residential apartments for older people who will be socially & culturally integrated with the local community in Naas.
 - b. Volunteers with different ages are recruited to revitalize the abandoned convent garden, as well as providing cultural and social activities and facilities in Luisne.
 - c. It hopes to create a dialogue across generations in the community that will contribute to long-term sustainable relationships through art.

- d. The project is not just intergenerational, but also transnational initiatives, with new perspective on how different ages can enjoy shared spaces, share experience, learning with each other, reshape a set of social circumstances and rebuild connections between people.
- e. Impression toward the project:
 - The project is initiated by a NGO and a group of volunteers; however, the support and resource allocation from local government is of ample importance.
 - The project is based on a social model of integrated housing (Integrated into the community). This unique development acknowledges the importance of intergenerational relations & multi-dimensional aspects of individual & community life. The emphasis is on social inclusion and enablement.
 - The older people will be challenged to consider their ageing in the context of what they can contribute to the local community. They are encouraged to participate in local affairs and to give voice to issues that are important to them.
 - This project demonstrates one of the means of engaging older people will be through arts and cultural based activities, which is non-threatening.
 - Intergenerational connectivity is important. This project can draw strength of each generation and make alliance; their joint effort can solve a lot of problem.
 - Intergenerational links can enrich the experience of all ages, they can gain mutual enjoyment & enrichment

IV. Evaluation of the event Organization

1. Organization / arrangement of the organizer
 - a. The arrangement of the conference is very good. The exhibition booths and presentations at the Global Village were also very useful.
 - b. The organizational efficiency of the conference team was impressive.
 - c. It was a shortfall in making balance between time given for the thoughtful, provocative, informed speakers and time reserved for interaction within the floor participants.
 - d. The table idea for sharing and commentary was good but time reserved for a discussion was so limited as to prevent equally informed and thoughtful participants to express their concerns, ideas, criticisms and hopes.

V. Conclusion

1. Definition of Age Friendly City
 - a. The conference speakers shared with the participants the perspective to understand the complexity of such a simple statement age-friendly that is not as clear as each of us thought. The definition of age friendly can be multifaceted. Some may take an intergenerational approach - age friendly should also be friendly to all ages. Some more participants in the conference shared that many countries suggested age friendly as in just friendly to older people. It should be cautious to take issue with this as actually the focus on this generation could disadvantage others. More sharing and deliberation should be given to bringing ages together, skills sharing and breaking down barriers between generations. More programmes need to be designed to discuss in define “age friendly”.

- b. Another critical issue is the use of "city" which is a bit restrictive. That may be how the programme started but there were many people there who would have appreciated a wider definition such as communities. It would have been interesting to have more discussion on these areas in the main session than just in the workshops. I feel if the programme addresses these two issues, it would lead to a much more interesting, innovative and inclusive programme.

2. Older person participation:

a. Three important highlights in the conference sharing:

i. Engaging older people in decision making

- By a structure of setting up a board of older people, a community wide forum, developing local networks and involving older people in task groups and events.
- In particular, forum events are targeted to gain a wider pool of feedback and information. It was very useful to be better consult and inform service planning.
- For the task groups, some were time-limited with specific target, while others have an ongoing role in the implementation of the strategy. On each groups, there were core defined duties to provide and co-ordinate local information about decision making and opportunity.
- There were some discussion on information and communication. In particular, it was considered as important that older people access to accurate, update information a key priority. The ways to address included newsletter, information kit, e-bulletin and mapping project.
- Mapping was referring to collating information about services, facilities, local groups, activities, and opportunities for older people. For instance, in Manchester, a "directory of data sources relating to older people's health, wellbeing, and quality of life in Manchester" was developed. It showed what data is available and how it is aggregated and addressed by area, age groups, etc. That helped highlighted information needs and develop outcome and performance management framework at policy level.

ii. Positive image of ageing

- It is believed that nearly every older people have a story about being on the receiving and end up some form of ageism. The use of campaign promotes a positive and healthy attitude towards ageing older people and challenges less positive stereotypes of older people found very effective.
- For instance in Australia, thousands copies of positive image calendars have been made over the past years, and the images have attracted a huge amount of attention. In Manchester, images also have been used in the Opportunity Age National Policy documents, which cited as good practice by their Audit Commission and used in the university courses.
- Women's voice awards were another local event that launched especially for female members. Over hundreds of people turned up to be recognized for their tireless input into the local community and support in the gender issues.

- iii. Mainstreaming aging is achieved by theme such as crime and community safety; transportation; housing and the home; economic life and income; health and social care; healthy aging; neighborhood, etc.
 - In UK, the spotlight of achievements and the key facts were collected, reviewed, documented, presented and promoted through annual report since 2004.
 - b. The bigger picture on strategy for cross cutting themes
 - i. It was noted that the strategy spines off three key process:
 - Promoting equality
 - Improving relationships
 - Improving engagement
 - c. The essence to improve services and opportunities for older people is to set a measurable outcome indicator in the quality of life of older people. Then the government and the policy maker as a leader would take ways in creating an age-friendly city.

At last but not the least, it is expected that anyone interested in improving life for the older people, such as lawmaker, field worker, academics, and clients themselves have an equal and significant part to play. The global network of the AFC should highly involve and engage different stakeholder meaningfully.

3. Regional Discussion

- a. Table discussion session for each region was arranged. Delegates from different countries and cities in Asia shared their plan in developing age friendly city projects. After the conference, the delegates keep in touch through emails and updating their development. For instances:
 - Seoul is seriously interested in the project and they are almost finishing up the baseline assessment.
 - Taiwan is also actively promoting AFC with 9 cities doing the project.
 - Tokyo had published the findings of the WHO AFC Checklist they used.
 - Some are using WHO International Classification of Functioning (ICF) as our survey tool and WHOQOL Bref to measure quality of life .
- b. The conference organizer has successfully launched the website for further communication among countries to post the updates of the development of AFC in their countries or cities.

2. Recommendation for Developing Age Friendly City in Hong Kong

- a. It is worthy to recommend Hong Kong Government to consider signing the declaration so as to show her commitment in developing AFC.
- b. The bottom up approach we have adopted is suitable for the local scenario. Further involvement of different districts should be encouraged.
- c. Elders' participation in the process of developing age friendly communities and giving advices to the authorities on how to improve their environment so as to enhance their quality of life is utmost important.
- d. Inter-generational collaboration programmes should be further developed in the local communities. The understanding among generations will sure promote respect and harmony as well as reaching consensus on mutual benefit in our district.

- e. Multi-disciplinary participation in promoting age friendly city is also another critical issue to be addressed. More cross over fora and platforms for collaboration and discussion will further strengthen up our work in developing age friendly communities. Involving professionals of architecture, urban design, medicine, public administration are essential.

- END -

PROGRAMME - AT A GLANCE



WEDNESDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER 2011

08.00 - 10.15	REGISTRATION GLOBAL VILLAGE EXHIBITION OPENS - <i>Presentations by various cities</i>
10.15 - 11.00	OFFICIAL OPENING - <i>Conn Murray</i> - <i>Phil Hogan T.D., Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government</i> - <i>John Beard</i>
11.00 - 12.30	OPENING KEYNOTE SPEECHES - <i>Ambassador James A Joseph</i> - <i>Gary Lawrence</i> ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS
12.30 - 13.30	LUNCH
13.30 - 14.15	OPENING CEREMONY - GLOBAL VILLAGE EXHIBITION
14.15 - 15.30	PLENARY SESSION 1: SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONNECTIVITY - <i>Chris Philipson</i> - <i>Sheila Peace</i> ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS
15.30-16.00	BREAK - TEA/COFFEE
16.00 - 17.30	CONCURRENT WORKSHOP SESSION - <i>Session 1: Building the Leadership Role of Older people</i> - <i>Session 2: Strengthening Face to Face Social Connections</i> - <i>Session 3: Access, Mobility and Transport</i> - <i>Session 4: Rural and Remote Communities</i>
19.30 - 21.30	DUBLIN DECLARATION SIGNING CEREMONY AND WELCOME NETWORKING RECEPTION

THURSDAY 29TH SEPTEMBER 2011

09.00 - 10.15	PLENARY SESSION 2: BUILT ENVIRONMENT - <i>Charles Landry</i> - <i>Michael Mehaffy</i> ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS
10.15 - 11.15	BREAK GLOBAL VILLAGE EXHIBITION
11.15 -12.45	CONCURRENT WORKSHOP SESSION - <i>Session 1: Public Spaces</i> - <i>Session 2: Implementation Tools and Techniques</i> - <i>Session 3: Strengthening Intergenerational Links</i> - <i>Session 4: Harnessing Technology</i>

12.45 - 13.45	LUNCH
13.45 - 14.15	GLOBAL VILLAGE EXHIBITION - <i>Presentations by various cities</i>
14.15 - 15.45	PLENARY SESSION 3: BUILDING MOMENTUM FOR THE WHO GLOBAL NETWORK - <i>Ruth Finkelstein</i> - <i>Conn Murray</i> - <i>Kathryn Jarrett-Ekholm</i> - <i>Anne Connolly</i> ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS
15.45 - 16.15	BREAK - TEA/COFFEE
16.15 - 17.45	CONCURRENT WORKSHOP SESSIONS - <i>Session 1: Building an Age-friendly City Initiative</i> - <i>Session 2: Building a National Programme</i> - <i>Session 3: Age-friendly Housing and the Built Environment</i> - <i>Session 4: Building Age-friendly Initiatives in Developing and Developed Countries</i>

FRIDAY 30TH SEPTEMBER 2011

08.30 - 09.30	GLOBAL VILLAGE EXHIBITION
09.30 - 10.45	PLENARY SESSION 4: BRINGING THE LEARNING BACK HOME - <i>Etienne Wenger</i> - <i>Jacob Kumaresan</i> ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS
10.45 - 11.15	BREAK
11.15 - 12.45	PLENARY SESSION 5: BUILDING THE GLOBAL NETWORK - <i>Rodd Bond</i> - <i>John Beard</i> ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION PANEL DISCUSSION
12.45 - 13.00	CONFERENCE CLOSE
13.00 - 14.00	LUNCH
14.00 - 20.00	VISIT TO AGE-FRIENDLY COUNTY INITIATIVE

DECLARATION

On the occasion of the 1ST International Conference 'Building the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities', held in Dublin, Ireland on 28-30 September 2011, the undersigning cities recognise that:

1. Ageing is a matter that affects all of us, at an individual level but also at the level of society. In a world in which life expectancy is increasing at the rate of over two years per decade, and the percentage of the population over 65 years is projected to double over the next forty years, the need to prepare for these changes is both urgent and timely.
2. Making the world a better place to grow old in will require a major shift in the way old age and older people are conceptualised in order to focus on the opportunities as well as the challenges of an ageing population. What is needed is new thinking and practice, supported by evidence, that focuses on promoting quality of life and well-being, valuing the contribution older people make in their communities, promoting their functional capacity, and removing the barriers which limit or inhibit their choice and ability to live life to the full.
3. Where we live, our physical, social and cultural environment, greatly impacts upon how we live. The significance of 'place' in all our lives cannot be overestimated. The built environment impacts on the quality of all of our lives and can make the difference between independence and dependence for all people, but especially for those growing older. Place is inseparable from our sense of identity and this is true for people of all ages, including older people.
4. Cities must equip themselves with the necessary means and resources and systems of resource distribution to promote equal opportunities and the well-being and participation of all citizens, including their older citizens. By 2030, two-thirds of the world's population will be living in cities, and the major urban areas of the developed world will have 25 per cent or more of their population people aged 60 and over. However, many older people in developed and developing countries live and will continue to live in rural and sometimes remote communities. These communities must also develop the capacity to promote the health, well-being and participation of their older citizens.
5. An age-friendly city and/or community encourages active ageing by optimising opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age. Developing age-friendly processes and practices will vary from place to place. Solutions that work in more developed countries may need to be radically adapted for less developed countries and vice versa, because of the different issues and challenges each faces. Developing age-friendly processes will also need to recognise the gender aspect of ageing and develop solutions to meet the varying needs of women and men as they age.
6. It is the challenge of the community and its social organisations to promote more favorable conditions for the full development of all persons, including that of older people, avoiding or removing all causes that hinder or prevent such development. In doing so, it is necessary to consider the differences between citizens, including age differences, as a part of the diversity of which society is made up, designing services and structures so that they can be used by everyone, and making unnecessary, as far as possible, the existence of specific elements for older people. There is a need for enhanced international co-operation to protect and promote the human rights of older people at community, city and state level.
7. An age-friendly city, in accordance with the framework developed by WHO, is one in which service providers, public officials, community leaders, faith leaders, business people and citizens recognise the great diversity among older persons and the importance of health to them, promote their inclusion and contribution in all areas of community life, respect their decisions and lifestyle choices, and anticipate and respond flexibly to ageing-related needs and preferences.
8. There is a need to recognise that a significant proportion of our older population, many of them living in developing countries, are at greater risk of living in poverty. Planning for poverty reduction at all levels needs to meaningfully address the concerns of older people and develop policies which include specific measures to alleviate poverty among older people.
9. Planning for environmentally, economically and socially sustainable communities is a crucial concern for local government, and such planning needs to take account of the ageing of populations and the role older people can play as a key resource, and meet the specific needs of older people outlined in this Declaration.

COMMITMENTS

Therefore, the undersigning cities and communities make the following commitments that shall be known as the Declaration of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, and they commit in the first place to:

- a)* Promote the Declaration of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities in appropriate national and international forums, fostering the maximum adherence possible to its principles and premises, and promote the enactment of regulations at all levels which will establish what is required, in terms of plans, programmes and resources, in order to implement the commitments in this Declaration within a reasonable period of time.
- b)* Initiate processes of collaboration to support the full application of the commitments in the Declaration of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, including participating in the WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities. This will involve commencing a 5-year cycle of continual assessment and improvement to make their community and city more age-friendly, and throughout the process, participating in the Network to support its role as a platform for mutual support, discussion and learning.
- c)* Develop communication channels and networks between the various cities and communities to stimulate and support advances in the promotion of equal rights and opportunities for older citizens and to share learning about advances in policies and practices which improve their lives.

The undersigning cities and communities also commit, where it is within their area of responsibility and economically feasible, to implement the following specific actions:

- I.* Promote among the general public awareness of older people, their rights, their needs, their potentials, and highlight the positive social, economic and cultural contribution they make.
- II.* Ensure that the views and opinions of older people are valued and listened to and that structures and processes of citizen-centred engagement are developed to ensure that older people have a meaningful involvement in decision making and are actively involved in the design and creation of innovation and change.
- III.* Adopt measures to develop urban and other public places that are inclusive, sharable and desirable to all, particularly older people, and ensure that publicly used buildings promote the dignity, health and well-being of users of all ages, and are fit for purpose to meet the changing needs of an ageing society.
- IV.* Promote and support the development of neighbourhoods and communities for all ages that are diverse, safe, inclusive and sustainable, and that include housing for older people that is of the highest quality. Particular attention should be given to the housing needs of older people in assisted living, residential care and nursing homes where their dignity and autonomy is at greater risk.
- V.* Work to establish public transport systems that are available and affordable to older people, and are 'seamless' within and across the various modes of transport that exist. The transport system should also promote and facilitate personal transport use such as cycling and driving by older people. As these become more difficult, personal alternatives such as affordable taxis and car pooling, which interconnect with the public system, should be made available.
- VI.* Promote the participation of older people in the social and cultural life of their community by making available a diverse range of events and activities that are accessible, affordable and tailored to be inclusive of them and promote their integration into the community. This should include the promotion of intergenerational activities.
- VII.* Promote and support the development of employment and volunteering opportunities for older people and recognise their positive contribution, to include the provision of lifelong learning opportunities in order to empower them and promote their autonomy.
- VIII.* Ensure that a comprehensive and integrated range of affordable, easily accessible, age-friendly and high quality community support and health services is available to older people, to include health promotion and prevention programmes, community-based support services, primary care, secondary acute hospital, rehabilitation services, specialist tertiary, long-term residential and end of life care.