

## [Concept note]

### **Fostering Age-Friendly Environments: Bridging Science, Policy and Implementation Workshop** 27 - 31 May 2024 Shanghai, China

#### **Background**

Population ageing is a profound demographic shift that brings with it a set of complex challenges and opportunities. Healthy ageing is a key approach to address the challenges associated with ageing, with an emphasis on developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables well-being in older age<sup>1</sup>. While the health sector plays a crucial role in promoting healthy ageing, it is essential to recognize that health and well-being are significantly influenced by factors outside the traditional health sector, such as social inclusion, economic security, housing, outdoor spaces, and community support systems. Thus, a whole-of-society transformation is imperative. The concept of age-friendly environments (AFEs) represents a promising approach to fostering functional ability and well-being across the lifespan. This approach aligns with the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing and the Regional Action Plan on Healthy Ageing in the Western Pacific, recognizing AFEs as a pivotal action area.

A workshop to discuss age-friendly environment and the economy of well-being would be beneficial as both initiatives share a common goal of promoting social well-being and environmental health. The economy of well-being prioritizes social, health, cultural, equity, and nature outcomes over economic growth as the main measure of national economic performance, aiming to serve people and communities first and foremost<sup>2</sup>. Understanding how countries can use the economy of well-being framework to shift their focus from just economic performance to address health and social outcomes in parallel is fundamental to creating an age-friendly environment. The age-friendly environment initiative promotes age-friendly practices that recognize the diversity in the capacity and circumstances of older adults, anticipate and respond to their needs and preferences in an equitable way, respect their decisions and choices, and protect the most vulnerable<sup>3</sup>. This workshop would provide a platform to discuss how these two initiatives can complement each other and work together to promote healthy ageing.

AFE development requires concerted efforts in stakeholder engagement, policy development, and practical implementation using the best available evidence. This workshop will contribute directly to intercultural and inter-disciplinary knowledge development and context-appropriate translation for creating age-friendly indoor and outdoor environments. It will also contribute to promoting inclusive, supportive, and empowering environments for all age groups, including ageing individuals, through the participatory generation of novel insights and their translation into evidence-informed decisions.

#### **Activity**

The Nordic Center (NC) at Fudan University will host a workshop on creating age-friendly environments. This workshop will be led by researchers from NC member universities (including Fudan University, Lund University, University of Helsinki and University of Eastern Finland) who specialize in age-friendly environments and have extensive experience translating evidence into policy and practice.

The workshop has three integral components:

1. In-person workshop on age-friendly environments.
2. Discussion on the economy of well-being.
3. Site visit to age-friendly communities.

#### **Objective**

The objective of this workshop is to share the scientific-based evidence on age-friendly environments in conjunction with economic well-being and discuss how they can be translated into policy options applicable to the context of different countries.

### **Activity timeline**

- May 27 – 29, 2024: On-site workshop
- May 30 – 31, 2024: Site visit

### **Workshop content**

The workshop will focus on using participatory and evidence-based approaches to bridge science, policy, and practice to create AFEs. Technical experts are invited to share knowledge throughout the workshop on understanding the challenges and opportunities in a whole-of-society transformation towards healthy ageing and learning about different experiences from ageing and aged societies.

1. Taking a hypothesis-driven approach, participants will learn about problem-solving and participatory methods. Participants will work on 1) case study throughout the workshop, and 2) addressing situations and issues in their country and identifying the solution.
2. Visits to two different sites are planned. In Shanghai, participants will visit an age-friendly and eco-friendly community that has been co-designed and co-developed with various stakeholders, including older people. In HeFei, participants will have an opportunity to observe how technological innovations can optimize environments for ageing populations.

### **Workshop language**

The workshop will be conducted in English.

### **Workshop participants (upon invitation only)**

To promote a high-quality discussion, participation will be restricted to 20 experts. Academic researchers or experts in healthy ageing providing technical support and policy advice to the government will be invited.

### **Expected outputs**

- Knowledge-sharing presentations: a repository of knowledge-sharing presentations, featuring insights from scholars and others.
- Thematic group discussions: focused group discussions in thematic areas, yield a wealth of insights and recommendations for action and impact.
- Final report: a report summarizing the workshop methodologies, participants' discussions and reflections, providing a valuable resource for Member States.

### **Expected outcomes**

- Enhanced knowledge and skills: participants will gain a deeper understanding of AFEs, drawing from a diverse range of perspectives and experiences.
- Innovative interventions: the workshop will generate insights into translating evidence into policy and programme, effective interventions and innovative solutions for creating age-friendly environments, with the aim of improving the quality of life for older adults.
- Networking and collaboration: participants will have the opportunity to network with experts in the field, building connections for future collaborations that can further advance the agenda of age-friendly environments.

### **References**

1. World Health Organization Regional Office for the Western Pacific. (2020). Regional action plan on healthy ageing in the Western Pacific. Manila. License: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.
2. World Health Organization. (n.d.). Age-friendly environments. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/teams/social-determinants-of-health/demographic-change-and-healthy-ageing/age-friendly-environments>
3. Decade of Healthy Ageing. (n.d.). Age-friendly environments. Retrieved from <https://www.decadeofhealthyageing.org/topics-initiatives/decade-action-areas/age-friendly-environments>

[Draft Programme]

**Fostering Age-Friendly Environments: Bridging Science, Policy and Implementation Workshop**  
27-31 May 2024



Date	Time	Activity
26 May, Sunday		Arrival in Shanghai, China
27 May, Monday (Day 1)	08:30-09:00	Transfer from accommodation to workshop venue
	09:00-09:05	Welcome speech by Nordic Center, Fudan University
	09:05-09:25	WHO Age-Friendly Environments Programme
	09:25-09:35	Presentation on age-friendly site in Shanghai
	09:35-12:00	Visit an age-friendly community in Shanghai to learn the experiences of creating age-friendly environments with community members (incl. 20 mins Q&A)
	12:00-14:00	Return to Fudan University & Lunch
	14:00-14:20	Problem-solving approach presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hypothesis-driven</li> <li>• Lean start-up</li> <li>• Example tools to use ex. community assessment, community resource mapping, etc.</li> <li>• Introduction of group work (present a case to be solved)</li> </ul>
	14:20-15:20	Problem-solving presentation: 1 <sup>st</sup> case study
	15:20-15:35	Coffee break
	15:35-16:45	Problem-solving presentation: 2 <sup>nd</sup> case study
16:45-17:00	Wrap up day 1: Reflections and housekeeping announcements	
28 May, Tuesday (Day 2)	09:00-09:05	Recap of day 1
	09:05-10:05	Country presentation on AFE work (8 slots, 10 min presentation and 5 min Q&A per country)
	10:05-10:20	Coffee break
	10:20-11:45	Country presentation on AFE work (continue)
	11:45-13:00	Lunch break
	13:00-16:00	Group work on problem solving <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GROUP 1: Participatory approaches in AFE</li> <li>• GROUP 2: Evidence-based approaches to AFE policy and programme</li> </ul> Each group starts with a 10–15-minute presentation, followed by a discussion.
	16:00-16:15	Wrap up day 2: reflections and housekeeping announcements
29 May, Wednesday (Day 3)	09:00-12:00	Beyond age-friendly environment: Economy of Well-being
	12:00-13:00	Lunch
	13:00-16:00	Time allocated for group work (prepare presentations)

30 May, Thursday (Day 4)	07:00-11:00	Transit
	11:00-12:30	Site observations in a technology-assisted age-friendly community in a Chinese second-tier city.
	12:30-13:30	Lunch
	13:30-15:00	Continue site visit
	15:00-18:00	Transit
31 May, Friday (Day 5)	09:00-10:30	Presentation by groups on problem solving
	10:30-11:00	Coffee Break
	11:00-12:00	Presentation by workshop participants on future adaptation/application
	12:00-12:10	Closing remarks from organizer
	12:10-12:20	Closing remarks from WHO
	12:20-12:30	Wrap up, group-photo session
	12:30-13:30	Lunch