AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES PROJECT
METHODOLOGY

VANCOUVER PROTOCOL

AGEING AND LIFE COURSE PROGRAMME

AUGUST, 2006
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INTRODUCTION

This methodological protocol for the WHO Global Age-Friendly Cities project is the result of discussions with collaborators from most participating countries. It is called the Vancouver Protocol in recognition of the generous support of the Government of British Columbia in hosting the first meeting of project partners. The purpose of the document is to guide country coordinators in planning the project generally to meet its objectives and in implementing the Focus Group Community Assessment of the Age-Friendly Cities project. The rationale for the Protocol is to ensure that the methods are applied appropriately and uniformly across all countries undertaking the Age-Friendly Cities project.
OVERALL PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND WORKPLAN

1.1 Objectives

The Age-friendly cities project has two main objectives:

- For WHO: to identify concrete indicators of an age-friendly city and produce a practical guide to stimulate and guide advocacy, community development and policy change to make urban communities age-friendly.

- For participating cities: to increase awareness of local needs, gaps and good ideas for improvement in order to stimulate development of more age-friendly urban settings.

1.2 Core definitions and parameters

The project rests on the premise that an age-friendly city promotes active ageing.

Active ageing is "the process of optimizing opportunities for optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age" (Active Ageing: A Policy Framework, WHO, 2002).

An age-friendly city:

- recognizes the great diversity among older persons
- promotes their inclusion and contribution in all areas of community life
- respects their decisions and lifestyle choices, and
- anticipates and responds flexibly to aging-related needs and preferences.

In an age-friendly community, there is a culture of inclusion shared by persons of all ages and ability levels. Policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environment are designed to support and enable older people to "age actively", that is, to live in security, enjoy good health and continue to participate fully in society.

Focus on Cities

Cities are the hub of human activity and progress. In the developed world, three-quarters of older persons live in cities already. In developing countries, the convergence of rapid demographic ageing and rapid urbanization makes it critical to design cities to support and enable the massive increase of older residents.
Making cities age-friendly is one of the most effective policy approaches for responding to demographic ageing. Major urban centres have the human, economic and social resources to make innovative age-friendly changes. Cities also are poles of attraction and trend-setters for their countries, and sometimes for the world.

**Focus on Specific Neighbourhoods or Districts within Cities**

Within larger urban agglomerations, residents typically live, contribute, socialize, play, and obtain goods and services in smaller and often very distinct neighbourhoods or districts which are commonly known, if not administratively defined. The project will be take place in a clearly identified neighbourhood or district within large cities: for example, the project in Rio de Janeiro will be undertaken in Copacabana.

Projects in smaller cities and towns may encompass the whole community if this is more appropriate.

The reports to WHO from Project Leaders will include a description of the urban district or neighbourhood where the project is undertaken. (see Focus Group Methodology)

### 1.3 Workplan

The Age-Friendly City project explicitly adopts a locally-driven and "bottom-up" approach that starts with the lived experience of older persons regarding what is, and what is not, age-friendly, and what could be done to improve their community's age-friendliness. The knowledge and experience of public, voluntary and commercial service providers in the local community is then combined with the information from older persons to provide a more complete picture of the community's strong points and barriers in regard to age-friendliness. This local assessment is communicated by project leaders to the public, older persons and decision-makers as the starting point for actions to make the community more age-friendly.

For participating cities, there are two major Phases to the project:
- community assessment by focus groups: August 2006 - February 2007
- local dissemination of results: April 2007 - June 2007

**Community Assessment**

The community assessment serves to:
- Identify features of the physical and social environment which:
  - are age-friendly
  - are not age-friendly
- To elicit local ideas and suggestions to improve age-friendliness
The community assessment will proceed in 2 steps:
- focus groups with older persons and caregivers of older persons who live in the community, followed by
- focus groups with local service providers in the public, commercial and voluntary sectors.

Local Dissemination

- To disseminate the local findings regarding the community's age-friendliness to the participants in the focus groups, civil society, the media and decision makers with a view to stimulating subsequent community action.

Reports from partners on the results of Community Assessment Phase will be synthesized and analysed by WHO to prepare indicators for the Age-Friendly City Guide which will be released on October 1, 2007.

1.4 Roles and Responsibilities

The implementation of the project within each country will require distinct competencies in overall project management, qualitative research and communications/public relations. Depending on his or her own availability and competencies, the project leader may wish to have one or two associates with particular skills to perform certain roles.

It strongly advised that a local project team be established comprising the project leader and associates as well as other persons and groups who can volunteer their expertise, networks and time to the project. The local project team should include representatives of older persons' organizations and involve them in all aspects of the project.

1.4.1 Local Project Team

Project Lead

The implementation of the Age-Friendly City project will be coordinated by a project leader. The specific responsibilities of the project leader include:

- attendance at WHO project meetings to plan each phase of the project and report findings
- liaison with the community, stakeholders, public authorities and WHO to implement the local project
- translation of project materials and reports
- recruitment and supervision of other key personnel as required, including a researcher and public relations and communications officer
• management of operations and resources to ensure that all activities are undertaken appropriately, on time and within budget
• local public relations, including dissemination of local community assessment results and public launch of the WHO Age-Friendly City Guide on October 1, 2007
• approval and submission of final reports for each phase of the project to WHO

Qualitative Research

The research function entails directing the qualitative research activities involved in the project to ensure that the research process meets scientific and ethical standards and that the findings are rigorously analysed and thoroughly reported. The person conducting the research **must** have experience in focus group methodology, and in qualitative data analysis. He or she should also have knowledge in gerontology.

The research responsibility involves the following activities:

- implementation of the overall focus group research strategy, including ethical approval and informed consent procedures, sampling, selection, recruitment, interview, data transcription, data analysis and report preparation
- selection and training of research assistants
- preparation of the final focus group report to be submitted to WHO
- reporting the research findings back to the focus group participants.

Public Relations and Communications

The public relations and communications role is to disseminate the Age-friendly cities project and the local findings by:

- arranging for meetings and public venues to disseminate findings to focus group participants, civil society and the public at large
- identifying key stakeholders and decision-makers and arranging for meetings
- preparing press releases and press conferences
- keeping track of all dissemination activities and recording any and all outcomes
- preparing a report of local dissemination activities for WHO

1.4.2 WHO Ageing and Life Course Programme:

The WHO has the primary responsibility for coordinating the project across all sites to ensure that countries are successful in obtaining the high-quality information necessary to produce the Global Age Friendly City Guide. This role entails the following responsibilities:

- Overall organization and direction of the project
• Preparation and coordination of frameworks of agreement with each collaborator
• Management of service contracts for sites sponsored by WHO
• Communications with project leaders and teams
• Coordination of international project meetings
• Preparation of methods protocols and presentation to project leaders
• Provision of technical and operational guidance to project leaders and individual members of local project teams, as required
• Synthesis of community assessment (focus group) reports from all collaborators
• Development of age-friendly city indicators
• Writing, editing and publication of WHO Age-Friendly City Guide
• Coordination of release of the Guide with all participating countries/cities
• Preparing a final report of the project for WHO and donors
## 1.5 Age-Friendly City Project Chronogram

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 2006</td>
<td>First WHO project meeting: Presentation of objectives, methodology and research protocol</td>
<td>WHO + Project Leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May - June 2006</td>
<td>Revision and pilot test of research protocol</td>
<td>WHO + pilot sites (to be determined)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2006 - February 2007</td>
<td>Community Assessment research via focus groups</td>
<td>Local project team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 23 2007</td>
<td>Final community assessment report submitted to WHO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week of March 12-16 (3 days) 2007</td>
<td>Second WHO project meeting: Sharing of community assessment findings across countries</td>
<td>WHO + Project Leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2007</td>
<td>Preparation for Local Community dissemination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2007 - June 2007</td>
<td>Local Community Dissemination</td>
<td>Local project team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 10, 2007</td>
<td>Local Community Dissemination report submitted to WHO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April - September 2007</td>
<td>Synthesis of Community Assessment Reports Development of age-friendly indicators</td>
<td>WHO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preparation of WHO Age-Friendly City Guide</td>
<td>WHO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final project report</td>
<td>WHO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 1, 2007</td>
<td>Global release of WHO Global Age-Friendly Cities Guide</td>
<td>WHO + Local project teams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
II. FOCUS GROUP COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

This section describes the methodology for assessing how age-friendly a neighbourhood or district is and what are the issues and barriers that will require community action. This work will a profile of the local community and a series of focus groups with older persons, caregivers of older persons and local service providers.

2.1 Community profile

It is important to present the geographic, demographic, social and economic characteristics of the city and district where the age-friendly cities project is undertaken. This information provides a context to understand the local age-friendly issues and challenges and permits generalization from this experience to other, similar locations in the country. Most of the information can be gathered from survey or administrative data. Included will be data on:

- location, size and topography of the district
- number and density of residents
- social, ethnic and economic characteristics
- numbers and proportion of older persons (60-74 and 75+)
- housing type and tenure
- distribution of public, commercial and voluntary services

2.2 Focus Groups With Older Persons And Caregivers

2.2.1 Sampling: selection, recruitment and screening

A minimum set of 5 focus groups will be conducted, 4 of which will be with older persons and 1 will be with informal caregivers of older persons who are too disabled or frail to participate in a focus group.

If local resources and time permit, a second set of focus groups is desirable to have a more extensive assessment of the community's age-friendliness. If a decision is made to have more than the minimum number of focus groups of older persons, it is important to ensure that all relevant characteristics are repeated to ensure a balanced representation of older persons in the total sample. Thus, 2 sets of older persons' focus groups would mean a total of 8 (2 x 4) focus groups, or 3 sets would be 12 (3 x 4) focus groups. Increasing the focus group of caregivers beyond one would also be desirable if resources permit.

Each focus group will consist of about 8-10 people. Efforts should be made to recruit participants from a variety of sources. About 12-15 people should be invited to each
group to allow for no-shows. Volunteers can be encouraged to "bring along another older family member or friend" to the focus group session because the subject matter is not of a particularly sensitive or private nature. To enhance the amount and efficiency of information provided by the focus groups persons recruited should be given a copy of the focus group questions ahead of time to prepare for the session.

Groups of older persons will be separated according to 2 age groups (60-74 and 75 and over) and to socio-economic status (low SES and middle SES), to constitute the 4 groups as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Socio-economic status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>60-74</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>60-74</td>
<td>Middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>75 and over</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>75 and over</td>
<td>Middle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Efforts should be made to include the "oldest-old", that is, people aged 85+, in the focus groups. Each group will consist of both men and women, with about 3 men and 5 women per group, to reflect the sex distribution in the older adult population. Although mixed gender groups is the norm, separate groups of men and women can be conducted if required by the local culture.

Selection by SES will be based on the SES of the neighbourhood where the participants reside, not on the income of individual participants.

Each group should also have a mixture of persons with no disabilities, mild disabilities and moderate disabilities, to be representative of the wide range of ability levels within the older adult population. Efforts should be made to have at least half of the people in the groups of persons aged 75 and over have some type of disability (not just wearing eyeglasses!). If your community has a significant proportion of older persons from ethnocultural minority groups, it is advisable to try to include persons from these subpopulations within the focus groups so that their voice is heard as well.

All participants must be able to communicate clearly, to understand the task and the questions, and to provide their own point of view. Some exclusion criteria may need to be applied if these essential conditions cannot be met (for example, persons with cognitive, hearing or speech impairments would be screened out).

The only important characteristic of the members of the caregiver group is that all of them provide direct support to an older person who would be too impaired, cognitively or physically, to participate in a focus group. In the focus group, the caregivers will be proxy respondents for the older persons for whom they are caring.

Individual profiles of all focus group participants must be completed to show that the selection procedure was followed as closely as possible. (See Annex 3.4 for a sample Participant Profile).
All participants in the older persons' and caregivers focus groups should be recruited within the geographical community that is under study. Convenience sampling and recruitment in the community is acceptable. Community-based religious, social, volunteer and recreational centres where older persons gather, and community agencies or services that have a large clientele of older persons are recommended places to recruit. A small payment or gift can be given to focus group volunteers if resources permit and if this is an accepted research practice in the country.

All prospective participants will be fully informed, verbally, and in writing, of the research purpose, procedure and areas of enquiry, and informed consent will be obtained prior to the focus group. Each country site will be required to adhere to local Ethical Review and Informed Consent procedures. A sample Consent form that may be adapted is provided in Annex 2.

### 2.2.2 Data collection instruments

The procedure, personnel and equipment required for conducting the focus groups is included in Annex 1 Focus Group Procedure Guide. **The focus groups must be recorded and transcribed for analysis.**

Separate focus group discussion guides adapted to each of the groups are proposed below. Open questions should be put first, and then followed by prompts to elicit further information which may not have been mentioned.

As mentioned above, to inform and prepare the persons you have recruited to participate fully in the focus groups, give them an advance copy of the questions that will be asked during the focus group.

Because many topic areas are covered in the focus group discussion, the expected duration is 2 ½ hours to 3 hours, including a 20-30 minute pause. If participant fatigue is a concern, consider holding 2 sessions on 2 separate days. Other ways to increase the efficiency of time use are mentioned in the Focus Group Procedure Guide:

If a topic later in the protocol is already discussed during exploration of another area earlier, do not repeat the discussion. Do not repeat topics or issues already discussed, if the focus group is
### Older Persons' Focus Group Questionnaire

#### Topics and Open Questions

**WARM-UP QUESTION**

What is it like to live in *(name of the city/district)* as an older person?

**Prompts**

Ask…

- Good features?
- Problems?

#### Topic 1.

**OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS**

Let's talk about outdoor spaces and buildings. I want to hear about your positive experiences, your negative experiences, and I want to get your ideas for improvements

What is it like to step outside of your home to go for a walk to get fresh air, run errands or visit?

What is it like to go into buildings, such as public offices or stores?

**Ask about…**

- design and maintenance of sidewalks and curbs?
- street intersections and crosswalks?
- traffic volume, noise?
- particular times of day, like nighttime?
- weather conditions?
- green spaces? walking areas?
- street lighting?
- protection from sun, rain or wind?
- benches, rest areas?
- sense of physical safety?
- sense of security from criminal victimization?
- In buildings: stairs, doors, lift devices, corridors, floors, lighting, signage, doors, toilets, rest areas

#### Topic 2.

**TRANSPORTATION**

The next area is transportation in your community. I want to hear about your positive experiences, your negative experiences, and I want to get your ideas for improvements

Describe your experience using public transportation -- bus or tram or subway, in your community.

**Ask about…**

Are public buses, trams or subway trains…

- Affordable?
- Easy to get to?
- Easy to board?
- Frequent enough when you want to travel?
- On time?
- Extensive routes to go wherever one wants?
- Waiting areas and stops with benches, lighting, protection from the elements?
- Secure from crime?
- Adapted transportation for disabled persons?
**What is it like to drive in your community?**

**For drivers:**
- Legible street signs
- Legible street numbers
- Lighting at intersections
- Easy to understand traffic signals
- Sufficient and close parking
- Handicapped reserved parking
- Drop off and pick up allowance
- Driver refresher courses

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**Topic 3. HOUSING**

Housing is the next topic we will cover. I want to hear about your positive experiences, your negative experiences, and I want to get your ideas for improvements:

Tell me about the house or the apartment where you live.

If your needs change, what are your choices for housing in the community?

**Ask about..**

**Acceptability..**
- Cost?
- Comfort?
- Physically safe?
- Security from crime?
- Proximity to services?

**Mobility and independence in the home:**
- move about easily?
- Reach and store things easily?
- do housework and chores?

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**Topic 4. RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION**

The next area deals with how the community shows respect for, and includes older people.

I want to hear about your positive experiences, your negative experiences, and I want to get your ideas for improvements.

**Ask about…**
- Politeness?
- Listening?
- Helpfulness?
- Responsiveness to needs in services and programmes?
- Consultation?
- Choices offered?
- Public recognition of the contributions of older people?
- Intergenerational activities?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic 5.</th>
<th>SOCIAL PARTICIPATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In what ways does your community show, or not show, respect for you as an older person?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what ways does your community include, or not include you as an older person in activities and events?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ask about…</strong> Are social and leisure activities…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Affordable?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accessible?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Frequent?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Convenient location?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Convenient times?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Offer choices?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interesting?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic 6.</th>
<th>COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The following topic we will explore deals with information. Again, I want to hear about your positive experiences, your negative experiences, and I want to get your ideas for improvements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your experience getting the information you need in your community, for example, about services or events? This can be information you get by</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ask about…</strong> Is information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accessible?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Useful?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Timely?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Easy to understand?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Difficulties with automated systems, print format and size?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic 7. CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to know about your experiences doing volunteer or paid work, and about your participation in public affairs. I want to hear about your positive experiences, your negative experiences, and I want to get your ideas for improvements.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell me about your participation in volunteer work?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell me about your participation in paid work, if you are employed now or if you are looking for paid work?.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell me about your participation in public community affairs, like community associations or municipal councils?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ask about…</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Availability of information about opportunities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accessible opportunities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Variety of opportunities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Attractiveness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recognition provided</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Remuneration (paid work)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Adjustment to older persons' abilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Adjustment to older persons' preferences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ways used to motivate older persons' participation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic 8. COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I want to know more about the health and social services in your community that help older people living at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to hear about your positive experiences, your negative experiences, and I want to get your ideas for improvements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your experience with the services in the community to help older persons?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ask about…</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Types of services available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accessibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Affordability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Responsiveness of services to individual needs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WRAP-UP QUESTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before we finish, are there any other issues or areas we haven't discussed that you want to talk about?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No prompts</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Caregivers' Focus Group Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics and Open Questions</th>
<th>Prompts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WARM-UP QUESTION</strong></td>
<td><strong>No prompts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the (name of city/district) like to live in for the person for whom you are providing care?</td>
<td>Ask about..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• design and maintenance of sidewalks and curbs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• street intersections and crosswalks?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• traffic volume, noise?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• particular times of day, like nighttime?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• weather conditions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• green spaces? walking areas?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• street lighting?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• protection from sun, rain or wind?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• benches, rest areas?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• physical safety?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• security from crime?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In buildings: stairs, doors, lift devices, corridors, floors, glare, lighting, signage, doors, public toilets, rest areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic 1. OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS</strong></td>
<td>Ask about…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let's talk about outdoor spaces and buildings. I want to hear about your positive experiences, your negative experiences, and I want to get your ideas for improvements</td>
<td>• Accessible public transportation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Accessible adapted transportation for disabled persons?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Affordable?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Easy to get to?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Easy to board?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Frequency?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Extensive routes to go wherever one wants?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Waiting areas and stops with benches, lighting, protection from the elements?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Secure from crime?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is it like for the older person you care for to go outside the home in your neighbourhood to get fresh air, run errands or visit?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is it like for the older person you care for to go into buildings, such as public offices or stores?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic 2. TRANSPORTATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The next area is transportation. I want to hear about your positive experiences, your negative experiences, and I want to get your ideas for improvements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe the experience of the older person you care for in using public transportation - - bus or tram or subway, in your community.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic 3. HOUSING</td>
<td>For drivers:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing is the next topic we will cover. I want to hear about your positive experiences, your negative experiences, and I want to get your ideas for improvements:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell me about the house or the apartment where the older person you care for lives.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If his or her needs change, can you find appropriate housing that is affordable in the community?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask about…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cost?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Comfort?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Physically safe?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Security from crime?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Proximity to services?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility and independence in the home:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• move about easily?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reach and store things easily?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• do housework and chores?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic 4. RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION</th>
<th>Ask about…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The next area deals with how the community shows respect for, and includes, older people. I want to hear about your positive experiences, your negative experiences, and I want to get your ideas for improvements.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what ways does the community show or not show, respect towards the older person you care for?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is the older person you care for included or not included, in the community events and activities?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Politeness?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Listening?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Helpfulness?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Responsiveness to individual needs in services and programmes (e.g. volunteers to assist, adapted transportation, special programmes?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consultation?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Choices offered?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Public recognition of the contributions of older people?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Intergenerational activities?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic 5</td>
<td>Social Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let's talk now about social and leisure activities in the community for the older person you are caring for.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to hear about your positive experiences, your negative experiences, and I want to get your ideas for improvements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How easily can the person you care for socialize in your community?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell me about the participation of the older person you care for in other activities, like education, culture, recreation, or spiritual activities?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ask about….</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are social and leisure activities…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Affordable?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accessible to disabled?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Frequent?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Convenient location?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Convenient times?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Offer choices?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Varied?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interesting?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic 6.</th>
<th>Communication and Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The following topic we will explore deals with information. Again, I want to hear about your positive experiences, your negative experiences, and I want to get your ideas for improvements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the experience of the older person for whom you care in getting the information he or she needs-- for example, about services or activities? This can be information by telephone, TV, in print or in person.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ask about..</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility of information?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usefulness of information?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeliness?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties with automated systems, print format, size?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties in comprehending information?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Topic 7.
### CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT

I want to know more about the experience of the older person for whom you provide care with respect to doing volunteer work, or paid work, and about their participation in public affairs.

I want to hear about your positive experiences, your negative experiences, and I want to get your ideas for improvements.

Tell me about participation in volunteer work of the person for whom you provide care?

Tell me about the participation in paid work, if she or she is employed, or is looking for work.

Tell me about the opportunity for the older person you care for to participate in community affairs, like committees, or community associations.

### Ask about…
- Availability of information about opportunities
- Accessible opportunities
- Variety of opportunities
- Attractiveness
- Recognition provided
- Remuneration (paid work)
- Adjustment to older persons' capacities
- Adjustment to older persons' preferences
- Ways used to motivate older persons' participation

## Topic 8.
### COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES

I want to know more about the health and social services that help older people living at home.

I want to hear about your positive experiences, your negative experiences, and I want to get your ideas for improvements.

### Ask about
- Types of services available
- Accessibility
- Affordability
- Responsiveness of services to individual needs
Tell me about the services that exist in the community to help older persons?

WRAP-UP QUESTION
Before we finish, are there any other issues or areas we haven't discussed that you want to raise?

No prompts

### 2.2.3 Data analysis and reporting

The focus groups will provide rich descriptions and accounts of the experiences of older persons directly, and indirectly through the caregiver focus group, regarding the age-friendliness of the city. The aim of the researcher is to bring together and compare the discussions of the 9 areas (warm up question + 8 topics) across the groups in order to bring to light:

- aspects of the community that are age-friendly (advantages),
- barriers and problems that show how the community is not age-friendly (barriers)
- suggestions to improve the problems or barriers identified.

In doing the analysis, it is important to distinguish the group consensus from a few individual opinions (however strongly they may be expressed). Quotes can be cited textually in the analysis to add colour to the interpretation, but these quotes should illustrate the common view, not the divergent opinion.

Another important aspect in the analysis of focus group data is the need to show the impact of the groups dynamics and analyse the session in ways that illustrate the interactions between the focus group participants. Non verbal cues, silences, strong reactions can provide valuable information.

The analysis and reporting of focus group data should proceed in the following successive steps.

**Step 1.** Analysis of themes and patterns for each of the 5 focus groups

**Step 2:** Analysis and comparison across focus groups (by age grouping, by socio-economic level) to identify patterns and implications

**Step 3.** Synthesis and reporting of findings.

**Data Analysis Grids** are provided below to structure the focus group analysis and reporting. It is strongly recommended that these Analysis Grids be followed closely to
ensure that the data are analysed and reported thoroughly and that the reports across all cities and countries are consistent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>60-74</th>
<th>75+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low SES</strong></td>
<td><strong>GROUP 1</strong> Group composition, numbers, duration, key dynamics….</td>
<td><strong>GROUP 3</strong> Group composition, numbers, duration, key dynamics….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. What the city is like</td>
<td>1. What the city is like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings</td>
<td>2. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Age-friendly features</td>
<td>• Age-friendly features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Age-friendly barriers</td>
<td>• Age-friendly barriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Suggestions</td>
<td>• Suggestions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Transportation:</td>
<td>3. Transportation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Age-friendly features</td>
<td>• Age-friendly features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Age-friendly barriers</td>
<td>• Age-friendly barriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Suggestions</td>
<td>• Suggestions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>etc</td>
<td>etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Middle SES</strong></td>
<td><strong>GROUP 2</strong> Group composition, numbers, duration, key dynamics….</td>
<td><strong>GROUP 4</strong> Group composition, numbers, duration, key dynamics….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What the city is like</td>
<td>What the city is like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outdoor Spaces and Buildings</td>
<td>Outdoor Spaces and Buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Age-friendly features</td>
<td>• Age-friendly features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Age-friendly barriers</td>
<td>• Age-friendly barriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Suggestions</td>
<td>• Suggestions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transportation:</td>
<td>Transportation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Age-friendly features</td>
<td>• Age-friendly features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Age-friendly barriers</td>
<td>• Age-friendly barriers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Older Persons and Caregivers Focus Group Analysis Grid**

**Step 1.**

The quality of the WHO Age-Friendly Cities Guide rests upon the quality of the reports submitted by each participating city!
GROUP 5 - Caregivers of older persons

Group composition, numbers, duration, key dynamics….

1. What the city is like

2. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
   Age-friendly features
   Age-friendly barriers
   Suggestions

3. Transportation:
   Age-friendly features
   Age-friendly barriers
   Suggestions

   etc

Older Persons Data Analysis Grid - Step 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>COMPARISON - AGE</th>
<th>COMPARISON - SES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What the city is like…</td>
<td>(Gr 1+2) vs. (Gr. 3+4)</td>
<td>(Gr. 1 +3) vs (Gr 2+4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor spaces and buildings</td>
<td>(Gr 1+2) vs. (Gr. 3+4)</td>
<td>(Gr. 1 +3) vs (Gr 2+4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>(Gr 1+2) vs. (Gr. 3+4)</td>
<td>(Gr. 1 +3) vs (Gr 2+4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Etc….</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 2: Analysis Within and Between Age Groups

For each of the 8 topic areas, what themes and patterns are similar, and what themes and patterns are different for the younger and older groups?

Step 2: Analysis Within and Between SES Groups:

For each of the 8 topic areas, what themes and patterns are similar and what themes and patterns are different across the Low and Middle SES groups?

Step 3: Comparison of Findings from Older Persons and Caregivers' Groups

For each of the 8 topic areas, what themes and patterns are similar and what themes and patterns are different between older persons who are able to represent themselves, and older persons who are represented by their caregivers owing to their level of disability?

2.3 Focus Groups With Providers Of Services

2.3.1 Sampling: selection, recruitment and screening

A series of 3 focus groups will be conducted with service providers in each of the following categories:

- **professional staff in public municipal or regional services** in the key areas (urban design, culture, parks and recreation, social and health services, transportation, security, police)
- **businesspeople and merchants** (Chamber of commerce representative, banks, grocery store merchants, pharmacists, restaurant, hairdresser/barber, shopping mall manager, media services..)
- **voluntary organizations** (for example, social service agency, Red Cross, charitable organizations, Alzheimer Society or other health NGO, religious organizations, older persons' centres)

Each focus group will consist of 6-8 members. Participant profiles will be completed to document the composition of each focus group. Informed consent from each participant is required.

2.3.2 Data collection instruments and procedure.

The same topics discussed in the focus groups with older persons will be raised with providers of services in the community, although the specific questions have been modified. It is anticipated that group members will not be able to comment on all the topics from their professional experience -- for instance, the grocery store manager might not have anything to say regarding older persons' housing or social and civic participation. However, all members should be able to comment on some areas. The focus group
The facilitator will have to maintain the engagement of all participants while covering the range of topics.

The focus groups will be recorded and transcribed.

**Providers of Services Focus Group Questionnaire**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics and Open Questions</th>
<th>Prompts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WARM-UP QUESTION</strong></td>
<td>No prompts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the <em>(name of city/district)</em> like to live in for older people? (10 min)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic 1. OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS</strong></td>
<td>Ask about…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Let's talk about outdoor spaces and buildings. I want to hear about the positive and the negative aspects, and I want to get your ideas for improvements | • design and maintenance of sidewalks and curbs?  
• street intersections and crosswalks?  
• traffic volume, noise?  
• particular times of day, like nighttime?  
• weather conditions?  
• green spaces? walking areas?  
• street lighting?  
• protection from sun, rain or wind?  
• benches, rest areas?  
• policing?  
• In buildings: barriers related to, e.g., stairs, doors, lift devices, corridors, floors, glare, lighting, signage, doors, public toilets, rest areas |
| From your observation and professional experience, what is it like for older persons to go outside on foot, for example, to go for a walk or run errands? | |
| What is it like for older persons to go into buildings, such as public offices or commercial establishments? | |
| **Topic 2. TRANSPORTATION** | Ask about.. |
| The next area is transportation. I want to hear about the positive and the negative aspects, and I want to get your ideas for improvements | • Accessible public transportation  
• Accessible adapted transportation for disabled persons  
• Affordable  
• Easy to get to?  
• Easy to board?  
• Frequency?  
• Extensive routes to go wherever one wants?  
• Waiting areas and stops with benches, lighting, protection from the elements?  
• Secure from crime? |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic 3.</th>
<th>Ask about:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **HOUSING** | - Affordability?  
- Comfort?  
- Physically safe?  
- Security from crime?  
- Proximity to services?  
- Housing choices for frail or disabled persons? |

From your observation and professional experience, tell me about the housing for older people in the community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic 4.</th>
<th>Ask about…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION** | - Politeness?  
- Listening?  
- Helpfulness?  
- Responsiveness to individual needs in services and programmes (e.g. volunteers to assist, adapted transportation, special programmes?)  
- Consultation?  
- Choices offered?  
- Public recognition of the contributions of older people?  
- Intergenerational activities? |

From your observation and professional experience, how are seniors shown, or not shown, respect by people who serve them?

From your observation and professional experience, how are older persons included or not included, in the community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From your observation and professional experience, what is the community like for older drivers?</th>
<th>For drivers:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|  | - Sufficient and close parking  
- Handicapped reserved parking  
- Drop off and pick up spots |
### Topic 5. SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Let's talk now about social and leisure activities in the community for the older person you are caring for.

I want to hear about the positive and the negative aspects, and I want to get your ideas for improvements.

From your observation and professional experience, how easily can older persons socialize in your community?

From your observation and professional experience, tell me about the participation of older persons in other community activities, like education, culture, recreation, or spiritual activities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ask about…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Affordability?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accessibility to disabled?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Frequency?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Convenient location?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Convenient times?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Offer choices?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Varied?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interesting?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Topic 6. COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

The following topic we will explore deals with information. I want to hear about the positive and the negative aspects, and I want to get your ideas for improvements.

From your observation and professional experience, how well are older persons getting the information they need-- for example, about services or activities? This can be information by telephone, TV, in print or in person.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ask about..</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Accessibility of information?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Usefulness of information?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Timeliness?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Difficulties with automated systems, print format, size?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Difficulties in comprehending information?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Topic 7.  
**CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT**

I want to know more about the experience of older persons with respect to volunteer work, or paid work, and about their participation in public affairs.

I want to hear about the positive and the negative aspects, and I want to get your ideas for improvements.

From your observation and professional experience, tell me about participation of older persons in volunteer work in the community?

From your observation and professional experience, tell me about the participation of older persons in paid work?

From your observation and professional experience, tell me about the participation of older persons in community affairs, like committees, or community associations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ask about…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Availability of information about opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Accessible opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Variety of opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Attractiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Recognition provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Remuneration (paid work)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Adjustment to older persons' capacities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Adjustment to older persons' preferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ways used to motivate older persons' participation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Topic 8.  
**COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES**

I want to know more about the health and social services that help older people living at home.

I want to hear about the positive and the negative aspects, and I want to get your ideas for improvements.

From your observation and professional experience, tell me about the health and social services that exist in the community to help older persons?

Ask about:
- Types of services available
- Accessibility
- Affordability
- Responsiveness of services o individual needs
WRAP-UP QUESTION

Before we finish, are there any other issues or areas we haven't discussed that you want to raise?

No prompts

### 2.3.3 Data analysis and Data reporting

The data will be analysed in sequential steps as follows:

**Step 1.** Analysis of themes and patterns for each of the 3 focus groups

**Step 2:** Analysis and comparison between service provider groups to identify patterns and implications

**Step 3:** Comparison of responses of service providers with responses of older persons and of caregivers

**Step 4.** Synthesis and reporting of findings.

#### Analysis Grid - Focus Groups with Providers of Services in the Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP 1</th>
<th>GROUP 2</th>
<th>GROUP 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group composition, numbers, key aspects of group dynamics</td>
<td>Group composition, numbers, key aspects of group dynamics</td>
<td>Group composition, numbers, key aspects of group dynamics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question 1 - What the city is like</strong></td>
<td><strong>Question 1 - What the city is like</strong></td>
<td><strong>Question 1 - What the city is like</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question 2 - Outdoor spaces and buildings</strong></td>
<td><strong>Question 2 - Outdoor spaces and buildings</strong></td>
<td><strong>Question 2 - Outdoor spaces and buildings</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Age-friendly features</td>
<td>• Age-friendly features</td>
<td>• Age-friendly features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Age-friendly barriers</td>
<td>• Age-friendly barriers</td>
<td>• Age-friendly barriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Suggestions</td>
<td>• Suggestions</td>
<td>• Suggestions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question 3 - Transportation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Question 3 - Transportation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Question 3 - Transportation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Age-friendly features</td>
<td>• Age-friendly features</td>
<td>• Age-friendly features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Age-friendly barriers</td>
<td>• Age-friendly barriers</td>
<td>• Age-friendly barriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Suggestions</td>
<td>• Suggestions</td>
<td>• Suggestions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Analysis Grid Focus Groups with Providers of services in the community**

**Step 2 - Between-group comparison**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>COMPARISON</th>
<th>COMPARISON</th>
<th>COMPARISON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What the city is like</td>
<td>Group 1 vs 2</td>
<td>Group 2 vs 3</td>
<td>Group 1 vs 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor spaces and</td>
<td>Group 1 vs 2</td>
<td>Group 2 vs 3</td>
<td>Group 1 vs 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>building</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>Group 1 vs 2</td>
<td>Group 2 vs 3</td>
<td>Group 1 vs 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Group 1 vs 2</td>
<td>Group 2 vs 3</td>
<td>Group 1 vs 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Etc…</td>
<td>Group 1 vs 2</td>
<td>Group 2 vs 3</td>
<td>Group 1 vs 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Analysis Grid Focus Groups with Providers of services in the community**

**Step 3 - Comparison with older persons and caregivers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>COMPARISON</th>
<th>COMPARISON</th>
<th>COMPARISON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What the city is like</td>
<td>Service providers vs</td>
<td>Service providers vs</td>
<td>Service providers vs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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2.4 Final Community Assessment Report

Each Project Leader will submit to WHO a final report of the focus group research by **February 23, 2007**. The final report which will be submitted with the data analyses (but NOT the transcripts).

The Report will consist of

1. **Executive Summary**: A brief overview of the research, presenting the main features of the community profile, a description of the participant sample and recruitment, selection and screening, the main findings, and the main limitations of the local study.

2. **Summary Sheets** of findings
   - Summary Sheet 1-Older Persons
   - Summary Sheet 2- Caregivers
   - Summary Sheet 3- Public sector service providers
   - Summary Sheet 4- Private sector service providers
   - Summary Sheet 5 - Voluntary sector service providers

A sample Summary sheet is presented in Annex 5

3 **Community Profile**: The description of the city and district in which the focus group research was conducted

4. **Methodology**: A description of the recruitment and sampling procedures, and characteristics of the focus group participants. Discussion of the 'mechanics' of each set of focus groups, including date, time, location and duration of each focus group. Also included will be number of potential respondents contacted, number of respondents participating, and a profile of respondents. Participants should be identified in terms of gender, age, and marital status. This demographic information should be provided for each of the groups and the groups should be identified by group number. The participants in the Providers of services in the community focus groups will be identified by occupation.

5. **Findings**: Dynamics of the focus groups that shed light on the discussions (e.g., comprehension of the task, degree of participation, dominance patterns, resistances). Presentation of the results of each step of the focus group data analysis. Comparisons across groups, and between the older persons and caregivers and the providers of services in the community. Every topic covered in the focus groups, and all key elements (age-friendly city advantage, barriers and suggestions) will be presented.
6. **Limitations:** Description of the limitations of the study that influence the results (for example, lower numbers of persons in groups, difficulties comprehending the task, unexpected disruptions during the focus groups.)

7. **Summary:** A summary, recapping the key points should be given. Because the goal of the focus groups is to assess the community's strengths, barriers and proposed solutions in order to make the city more age-friendly, the summary should concentrate on these elements. The summary should also include what could be considered as limitations. This may include such issues as group dynamics, respondent's willingness to participate in discussion, difficulties in focusing discussion, etc. Such limitations do not imply that something was done incorrectly, but simply serve to alert the reader that there may have been some mitigating factors that may have affected the outcome of the focus group.

8. **Annex: Data Analyses.** Copies of the data analyses must be sent along with the final report to confirm that focus group research was conducted and analysed. **DO NOT** send transcriptions of the focus groups to WHO.

The Final Community Assessment Report and data analyses should be sent to Dr. Louise Plouffe (plouffel@who.int) or Dr. Alexandre Kalache by email (kalachea@who.int) or by post: Ageing and Life Course Programme, World Health Organization, 20 Avenue Appia, CH- 1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland
Annex 1

Focus Group Procedure Guide

1. ORGANISATION

The selection of interview locations should be made with the following factors in mind:
- room dimensions (the room needs to easily accommodate a table or circle of chairs to comfortably seat all the participants and the focus group moderator)
- flip chart or equivalent is needed
- comfort (seating etc.)
- accessibility (in relation to both geographical access and consideration of those with disabilities), and
- transport options available.

A total of about 2½ to 3 hours should be allocated for each group (which includes a 20-30 minute break). If this is too long, consider holding 2 sessions on 2 separate days. Other ways to increase the efficiency of time use are:

- Avoid repeating topics and issues that are raised earlier
- If a topic area does not elicit much discussion despite a few prompting questions, move on to the next topic-- another group of participants may have more to say in that area

Participants should be provided with light refreshments, including beverages,

Name tags stating each participant's first name only should be provided. A flip chart or white board is needed to record and illustrate ideas and themes that arise.

Each focus group should be audio-taped (in double for security) and the tapes transcribed as soon as possible.

2 FOCUS GROUP LEADER ROLE

The focus group leader should be the person responsible for conducting the research. The leader must have experience conducting focus groups and have gerontological knowledge. The researcher's role as Focus group leader is to keep the group “focused” and to generate a lively and productive discussion through the participation of all persons present. As many of the topic areas as possible should be covered, with questions to prompt and guide discussion if required.
3. **ASSISTANT ROLE**

An assistant should be present at each focus group session. The assistant’s role includes:

- setting up the room;
- organising the snacks;
- noting and recording body language and other non verbal cues to share with the focus group leader following the session;
- assisting the focus group leader as required with noting points on the flip chart; ensuring that the sessions are taped in double; and that the tape recorders are functioning properly;
- providing general support to the focus group moderator.

4. **RUNNING THE GROUP**

The focus group discussion, including the mid-session break should last no more than 2 1/2 - 3 hours maximum. Allow 10-15 minutes per question (i.e., 1 hour 40 minutes to 2 hours 30 minutes) Encourage the group to explore issues of concern to them as they arise, rather than impose an arbitrary agenda. Allow each group's discussion to develop in different ways.

Sessions will be tape recorded and transcribed. PLEASE USE TWO TAPE RECORDERS JUST IN CASE ONE-TAPE RECORDER MALFUNCTIONS.

The focus group assistant should note body language and other non-verbal communication (as noted above).

5. **INFORMED CONSENT**

Each setting has its own legal requirements and accepted practices for Informed Consent and/or Ethical Review committees for focus group participation. See Annex 2 for a sample Consent Form that can be adapted as required.

6. **PREPARATION OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS**

When participants are recruited, they should be given the list of focus group topics and questions and asked to think about them in preparation for the focus group discussion. This will ensure that participants are fully informed about the research and that the discussion will be fruitful and as efficient as possible.

7. **HANDLING OF UNFORSEEN OCCURRENCES**

As the focus group leaders are experienced in conducting focus groups, they should be prepared to handle any conflicts or unforeseen circumstances that may arise. Please be
prepared to handle any such occurrences and include them in your final report. Please be prepared to refer people into counseling or other supportive services if issues arise which require such follow-up.

8. DISCUSSION GUIDE PROCEDURE

To commence the groups, a brief introduction will be given that explains the purpose of the focus group and the contributions expected from participants. For example,

“Good morning/afternoon. My name is …… Thank you all for coming along today and volunteering your time. What we are doing today is getting information from you about your city (name of city). We want to find out how "age-friendly" your community is.

An age-friendly community is a community which enables older persons to live in security, maintain their health and participate fully in society.

We are going to talk about many different aspects of the community, including the city environment, buildings, roads, and the different services and activities in the community.

From your experience as (choose one of the following)

- an older person;
- a person providing care to an older person,
- a provider of services in the community

I want to hear about the positive experiences, or good features of the city of (name of city), that show the ways in which the city is now "age-friendly".

I also want to learn about the negative experiences, or bad features of the city that show the ways in which the city is NOT age-friendly.

Finally, I want your suggestions on the ways to improve the "age-friendliness" of the city.

There are no right or wrong answers. Every person's opinion is important.

The session is being tape-recorded so that we don’t miss anything you say. Be assured that you will not be personally identified in the final report.

So that we can understand the tape it is important that only one person speaks at a time, and we will make sure that everyone gets a chance to have their say.
Now, let’s start with…..”

The topics provided in this Protocol will be used to conduct the focus groups. The questions are intentionally broad, as it is important to allow participants to spontaneously raise the specific areas and concerns relevant to them. Only once it has become apparent that some issues will not be raised spontaneously is it appropriate for leaders to ask specific questions to prompt exploration.

Efforts should be made to raise cover all topic areas.

Please note that the ways in which the questions will be asked will depend on the nature of the focus group participants. Terminology will differ between countries and segments, as will the level of language appropriate for use. More prompts may be necessary for some groups than for others, and it may be necessary to be more indirect in phrasing questions depending on the profile of the participants. When conducting the focus group sessions, please note that the group begins with a broad "warm-up" question, which is followed by the central portion during which the core of the work is done, and is completed by a "wrap-up" question during which the participants have a chance to raise other issues important to them.
Annex 2

Informed Consent*

Because of ethical principles and a respect for the autonomy of the individual, informed consent is not just a simple formality. It is a fundamental procedure to protect the rights of the people who participate in the study.

The process of obtaining the informed consent from an older person requires that the interviewer clearly understand that the right to give this consent is never delegated to a different person because of the participant’s age. This is the participant’s right, and it cannot be given to and cannot be denied by any other member of the home or the Center as long as the older person has cognitive capacity to:

- understand that he/she has the right to agree to participate in the survey or to refuse to be involved;
- make a judgment of whether or not he/she wants to participate; and
- communicate his/her decision to the interviewer.

As a result, before beginning the focus group, you should read the respondent the “Declaration of Consent” to participate in the Age-Friendly Cities Project. You should read it slowly. When you finish, ask the individual whether he/she has any questions about the Declaration. If the person can read, give him/her the opportunity to sit down and read the Declaration for him/herself.

Once the person has given his/her verbal consent, give him/her the sheet to keep so that he/she can refer to it in the case of any doubt. The facilitator should sign his/her own name on the “Declaration of Consent” sheet that the respondent has freely consented to participate in the Age-Friendly Cities Project.

It is always necessary to leave the respondent a copy of the Declaration of Consent with the name and telephone numbers of the person that he/she should call in case doubts or questions about the study should arise.

* Adapted from the SABE survey developed by the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization; Washington, D.C:
Declaration of Consent - Study of Age-Friendly Cities

Statement to be read to each of the participants before the focus group

How are you? My name is ______________________ and I am with the (name of organization conducting the focus group research)______________.

- You have been chosen to take part in an important study. The objective of this study is to better understand how cities can help older people live healthy and active lives. During the discussion you will be asked to share your positive and negative experiences, and your ideas for improving the city for older persons.

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You can withdraw at any time during the meeting if you choose. The meeting will be tape recorded but all the material from the tapes will be reported without any names. The written information you give about yourself will be used only to describe the group. Your name will never be reported.

Do you agree to participate in the study? (Circle the person's verbal response)

Yes
No

Name:________________________________________   Date:___________

Signature*:________________________________________

* In many cases, older persons are not likely to want to sign a piece of paper because they either do not read or because they are suspicious of what will be done with their signature. Thus, the signature is not a requirement, but an option given to the participant.
Annex 3

NB for Project leader: Print age-friendly print version of the questions:  
- black on white (or very pale) non-glare paper,  
-14 pt Arial (or other plain font)  
- more spacing of the print on the page

Questions for Distribution to Participants

Older Persons

Thank you for accepting to come to a meeting that will be held on (day and time) in (location) to talk about your (name of city or district).

Here are the questions that will be asked during the meeting. Please read them before coming and think what you may want to say about each one during the meeting.

Think about your positive as well as negative experiences in each area, and think about improvements that could be made.

1. General Question

What is it like to live in (name of city/district) as an older person?

2. Outdoor spaces and buildings

- What is it like to step outside of your home to go for a walk to get fresh air, run errands or visit?

- What is it like to go into buildings, such as public offices or stores?
3. Transportation

- Describe your experience using public transportation -- bus or tram or subway, in your community.
- What is it like to drive in your community?

4. Housing

- Tell me about the house or the apartment where you live.
- If your needs change, what are your choices for housing in the community?

5. Respect and Inclusion

- In what ways does your community show, or not show, respect for you as an older person?
- In what ways does your community include, or not include you as an older person in activities and events?

6. Social Participation

- How easily can you socialize in your community?
- Tell me about your participation in other activities, like education, culture, recreation, or spiritual activities?

7. Communication and Information

- What is your experience getting the information you need in your community, for example, about services or events? This can be information you get by telephone, radio, TV, in print, or in person
8. Civic Participation and Employment

- Tell me about your participation in volunteer work?

- Tell me about your participation in paid work, if you are employed now or if you are looking for paid work?

- Tell me about your participation in public community affairs, like community associations or municipal councils?

9. Health and Social Services

- What is your experience with the services in the community to help older persons?
Discussion Questions

Caregivers of Older Persons

Thank you for accepting to come to a meeting that will be held on (day and time) in (location) to talk about your (name of city or district).

Here are the questions that will be asked during the meeting. Please read them before coming and think what you may want to say about each one during the meeting.

Think about the positive as well as negative experiences in each area, and think about improvements that could be made.

1. General Question

What is it like for the older person you care for to live in (name of city/district) as an older person?

2. Outdoor spaces and buildings

- What is it like for the older person you care for to step outside the home to get fresh air, run errands or visit?

- What is it like for the older person you care for to go into buildings, such as public offices or stores?

3. Transportation

- Describe the experience of the person you care for in using public transportation -- bus or tram or subway, in your community.

- What is it like for you to drive the older person you care for in your community?
4. Housing

- Tell me about the house or the apartment where the older person you care for lives.

- If the needs of the older person you care for change, what choices does he or she have for housing in the community?

5. Respect and Inclusion

- In what ways does the community show, or not show, respect for the older person you care for?

- In what ways does the community include, or not include as the older person you care for in activities and events?

6. Social Participation

- How easily can the person you care for socialize in the community?

- Tell me about the participation of the older person you care for in other activities, like education, culture, recreation, or spiritual activities?

7. Communication and Information

- What is the experience of the older person you care for in getting the information he or she needs, for example, about services or events? This can be information you get by telephone, radio, TV, in print, or in person

8. Civic Participation and Employment

- Tell me about the participation of the older person you care for in volunteer work?
• Tell me about the participation of the older person you care for in paid work, if he or she is employed now or is looking for paid work?

• Tell me about the participation of the older person you care for in public community affairs, like community associations or municipal councils?

9. Health and Social Services

• What is the experience of the older person you care for with the services that exits in the community to help older persons?
Discussion Questions

Service Providers

Thank you for accepting to come to a meeting that will be held on (day and time) in (location) to talk about your (name of city or district).

Here are the questions that will be asked during the meeting. Please read them before coming and think what you may want to say about each one during the meeting. We want to hear your observations and professional experiences as a provider of service to older persons.

Think about the positive as well as negative experiences in each area, and think about improvements that could be made.

1. General Question

From your observation and professional experience, what is it like for older persons to live in (name of city/district)?

2. Outdoor spaces and buildings

- What is it like for older persons in your community to go outside of their home to go for a walk to get fresh air, run errands or visit?
- What is it like for older persons to go into buildings, such as public offices or stores?

3. Transportation

- What is the public transportation system like for older persons?
- What is it like for older persons to drive in your community?

4. Housing:

- Tell me about the houses or the apartments where older persons live in your community.
- If the needs of older persons change, what choices do they have for housing in the community?
5. Respect and Inclusion

- In what ways do people who provide services to older persons show, or do not show, respect for older persons?
- In what ways are older persons included or not included in activities and events in the community?

6. Social Participation

- How easily can older persons socialize in your community?
- Tell me about the participation of older persons in other activities, like education, culture, recreation, or spiritual activities?

7. Communication and Information

- How well do older persons get the information they need in your community, for example, about services or events? This can be information by telephone, radio, TV, in print, or in person.

8. Civic Participation and Employment

- Tell me about the participation of older persons in volunteer work?
- Tell me about the participation of older persons in paid work?
- Tell me about the participation of older persons in public community affairs, like committees, community associations or municipal councils?

9. Health and Social Services

- Tell me about the health and social services that exist in the community to help older persons?

Annex 4
PARTICIPANT INFORMATION
Older Persons

Some information is needed about you so that we may describe the overall characteristics of our volunteers. Please complete this Information Sheet by writing a checkmark beside the answer that describes you, or by filling in the answer. If you have a question, ask the group leader.

1. Age at last birthday____________

2. Sex: Male_______ Female___


4. Present occupation or, if retired, major pre-retirement occupation:____________

5. Your judgment of your current health:
   Excellent____ Good___ Fair______ Poor_____

6. Do you have any health problem that limits your ability to do your normal daily activities? Yes____________ No____________

7. What is the highest level of schooling you completed completed?:
   Primary School ______________
   Secondary School ______________
   College or University ______________

7. Do you rent, or own the home where you live?
   Rent___________ Own______________
8. Who lives in your home with you? (check all that apply)

☐ No-one else but me

☐ Spouse or partner

☐ Children (Number ________)

☐ Other relatives (Number________) Relationship (e.g., mother, sister)

☐ Non-relatives (Number:________) Relationship (e.g. boarder, housekeeper)

Total number of people in your household:_______

9. Neighbourhood and city where you live:

__________________________________________
PARTICIPANT INFORMATION
Caregivers

Some information is needed about you so that we may describe the overall characteristics of our volunteers. Please complete this Information Sheet by writing a checkmark beside the answer that describes you, or by filling in the answer. If you have a question, ask the group leader.

1. Sex: Male__Female__


3. Present occupation or, if retired, major pre-retirement occupation:____________

4. Highest education level completed:
   - Primary School _______________
   - Secondary School _______________
   - College or University _______________

5. Are you currently providing support or care to an older person who is (check all that apply)
   - ☐ physically disabled
   - ☐ difficulty moving or walking
   - ☐ hearing impaired
   - ☐ visually impaired
   - ☐ has dementia
6. What is your relationship to the older person to whom you are providing care?

☐ Parent or parent-in-law

☐ Other relative (uncle, aunt…)

☐ Non-relative

7. Does the person to whom you are providing care live in your home?

   Yes___________ No___________

8. In which neighbourhood and city does the older person to whom you are providing care live?

   ________________________________________________________________
PARTICIPANT INFORMATION
Providers of services in the community

Some information is needed about you so that we may describe the overall characteristics of our volunteers. Please complete this Information Sheet by writing in the answer or checking the proper box. If you have a question, ask the group leader.

1. Age at last birthday_______
2. Sex: Male_________ Female__

3. Present occupation:____________

4. In what sector of the community are you employed?
   □ Public (municipal) sector
   □ Commercial or business sector
   □ Voluntary sector

5. How long have you employed in this occupation in this city?
   □ less than 2 years
   □ 2-5 years
   □ over 5 years

6. How much experience do you have with older persons in your work?
   none_______ a little__________ a moderate amount_______ a lot_______
Annex 5

Final Report - Results Summary Sheet

*NB: A similar sheet will be completed for the caregivers group, and service providers (combined)*

**City:**

Summary Sheet 1 - Older Persons

What is the city like for older persons?

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<th>Age friendly advantages</th>
<th>Barriers to age-friendly</th>
<th>Suggestions for improvement</th>
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<td>Community support and health services</td>
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Issues raised in wrap-up
question