

Evaluating Age-Friendly Work: Moving Towards Sustainability

**AARP Age-Friendly Communities Network Event
October 7, 2014**

**Jenny Campbell, MSW, Ph.D.
jenny@campbell-collaboratives.com
(610) 642-1196
Grantmakers in Aging (GIA)**

Overview of Presentation

Community AGEnda Initiative: Funding, Scope of Work, Grantees, Sample Initiatives

Evaluating Age-Friendly Work: Process, Theory of Change, Logistics

What we have found so far...



Community AGEnda: Pfizer Foundation Funded/GIA Intermediary

- **GIA** is the nation's leading membership organization of funders serving aging
- **Pfizer Foundation**: Project: \$1.3-1.5 million/year for 3 years
 - Supports 5 U.S. sites
 - Builds national and international capacity for age-friendly work
 - Sites must raise \$40,000 minimum
 - Matching grants of \$120,000
 - Annual funding commitment

Community AGENDA Sites/Grantees

- **Atlanta:** Atlanta Regional Commission(ARC)
- **Phoenix:** Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG)
- **Miami:** Health Foundation of South Florida (HFSF)
- **Kansas:** Mid-America Regional Council (MARC)
- **Indiana:** Indiana Philanthropy Alliance (IPA)

Community AGEnda: Contributing to the AF Movement

- Communications and knowledge-sharing projects
- Fact Sheets/Trend Data
- Community AGEnda sites videos
- Friendly Faces, Friendly Places photography contest
- Searchable database
- Funders for Age Friendly Communities

Sample Initiatives: Micro, Mezzo, Macro

- Bus stop seats
- Community garden irrigation system
- Conferences, educational programming
- Public Broadcasting partnership
- Integrate AF concepts into municipal planning
- Certification process for AF work
- Public awareness re: transportation/mobility
- Universal (home) design toolkit
- AF business certification
- AF certification for parks and recreation
- Older adult employment
- Readiness assessment: WHO AF status
- Creation of Village sites
- Time banking



Evaluating Community AGEnda

1. What is the overarching principle that guides the evaluation process?
2. What is the process of the evaluation?
3. How were indicators identified?
4. What format was created for reporting?
5. How did the evaluation results impact subsequent efforts?

1. Overarching Principal: Theory of Change:

- **Impact**: Changes in people's lives including: changes in knowledge, skills, behaviors, health and conditions
- **Influence**: Changes in institutions, service systems, community norms, partnerships, public will, policies, regulations, service practices and issue visibility
- **Leverage**: Changes in public or private funders' investment strategies for community programs

<http://www.aecf.org>

2. What is the process of the evaluation?

- Messy process. Everyone is not doing the same work.
- Needs, capacities and opportunities dictate projects.
- What went right? What went wrong? Use evaluation results to inform next steps.
- Formative and summative evaluation utilized.
- Evaluation is integrated into each initiative
- Each project has a program evaluator (2-3 year).
- Creation of an Evaluator Learning Circle (2-3 year).

3. How were indicators identified?

- Indicators arose out of the work and were different for each project. Key questions include:
 - What was the ultimate objective for this part of the initiative?
 - What is possible to measure?
 - Will this information provide useable data to inform next steps?
- Blending data from disparate initiatives a challenge

4. What format was created for reporting

- Narrative-based reporting format with guiding questions.
- Provided some templates to capture the full range of information:
 - number reached
 - sectors involved
 - involvement in planning of activities
 - involvement in participating

Questions the Evaluation Seeks to Answer:

- What was the strength of effort?
- How many people were reached/impacted?
- What are the promising practices that are emerging?
- What are the opportunities to deepen engagement with AF work?
- What doesn't work? Why?
- What does work? Why?
- What is the story emerging of gaining traction with AF work?

5. How did evaluation results inform future efforts?

- Formative
 - Using the “Evaluation Lens” has informed all steps of the initiative.
 - Evaluation presence at all meetings/project junctures.
 - Evaluation helps provide linkages of successes and challenges amongst grantees.
- Summative
 - Slower to get information and feedback, just starting to analyze Year 2 data.
 - AF work is long-term effort and seeing effects of work is a long-term proposition.



What we have found so far...

Sample Findings: Impact

- 2500 Educational conferences and meetings
- 3000 reached through public media and publications
- Improved access to physical infrastructures due to specific access initiatives
- 700 involved with planning for AF work
- Planning maps distributed to 1200
- Took-kit for AF work created/distributed to 5,200
- Caregiver campaign video segment 2.6 million views
- 765 participate in focus groups about AF future

Sample Finding: Influence

- Inclusion of AF principles included in regional and municipal plans (70 recommendations)
- Improve accessibility in 12 park locations
- Commitment made to start new Villages
- Changes to area master plans or transportation plans
- The establishment of an ongoing partnerships to address AF issues
- Building of public will to support AF initiatives
- Increasing the visibility of an AF issue
- The development of a certification for age-friendly businesses or parks and recreation

Sample Findings: Leverage

- Secure organizational commitment to provide future leadership on AF regional work
- Funding secured for start-up for Villages initiative
- All five grantees leveraged dollars totaling \$676,975 during first year
- \$600,000 in matching funds raised to date
- Funding secured from multiple philanthropic organizations to support Community AGEnda work



© Sudipto Das

Lesson's Learned About Successful Age-Friendly work

- **Four pillars for successful AF initiatives:**
 1. Engage the public
 2. Build public will
 3. Contribute to building the infrastructure to advance AF work
 4. Work across sectors
- **Funding:** Find an existing connection between funder strategies and AF work
- **Language:** Consider the impact of using the term “aging” vs. intergenerational language
- **Partnerships:** Think outside the box

Challenges in Evaluating Age-Friendly Work

- Large in scope
- Unique initiatives
- Non-traditional partnerships/cross-sector
- Regional impact difficult to measure over short-term
- Need to engage disparate audiences:

