Evaluating Age-Friendly Work: Moving Towards Sustainability

AARP Age-Friendly Communities Network Event October 7, 2014

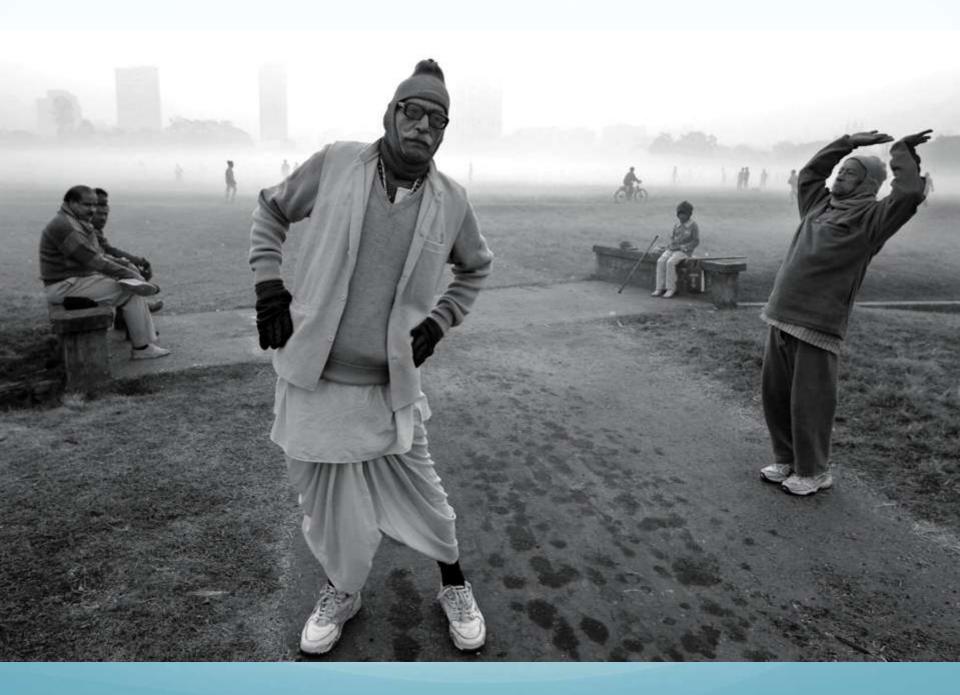
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Overview of Presentation

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

- **<u>GIA</u>** 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:

- <u>Impact</u>: 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
- <u>Leverage</u>: 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

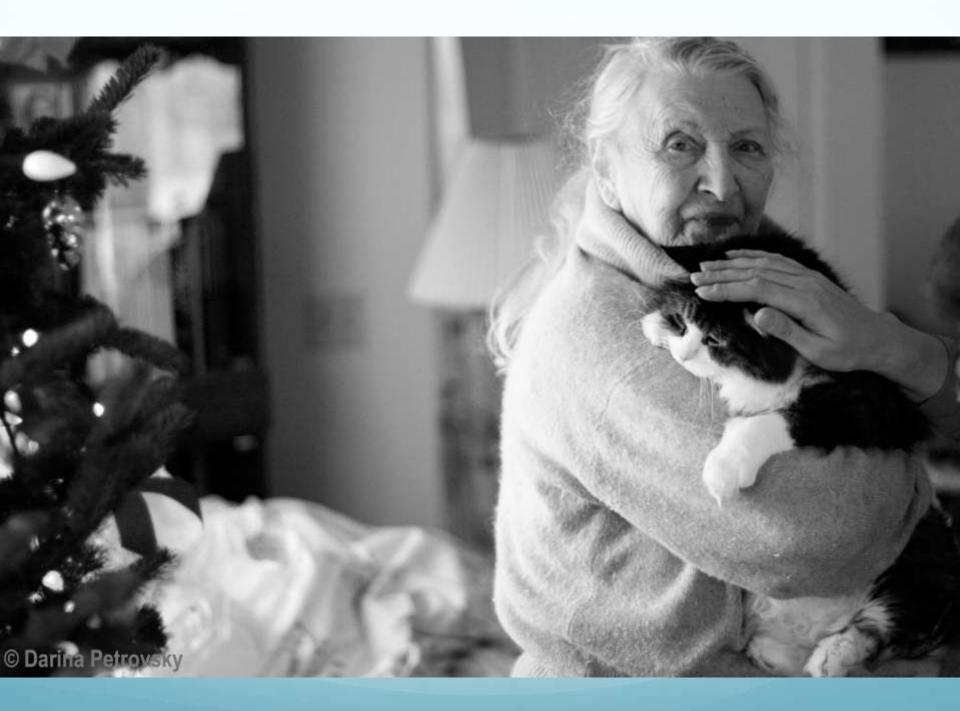
- Narrative-based reporting format with guiding questions.
- Provided some templates to capture the full range of information:
 - number reached
 - sectors involved
 - involvement in planning of activities
 - involvement in participating

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

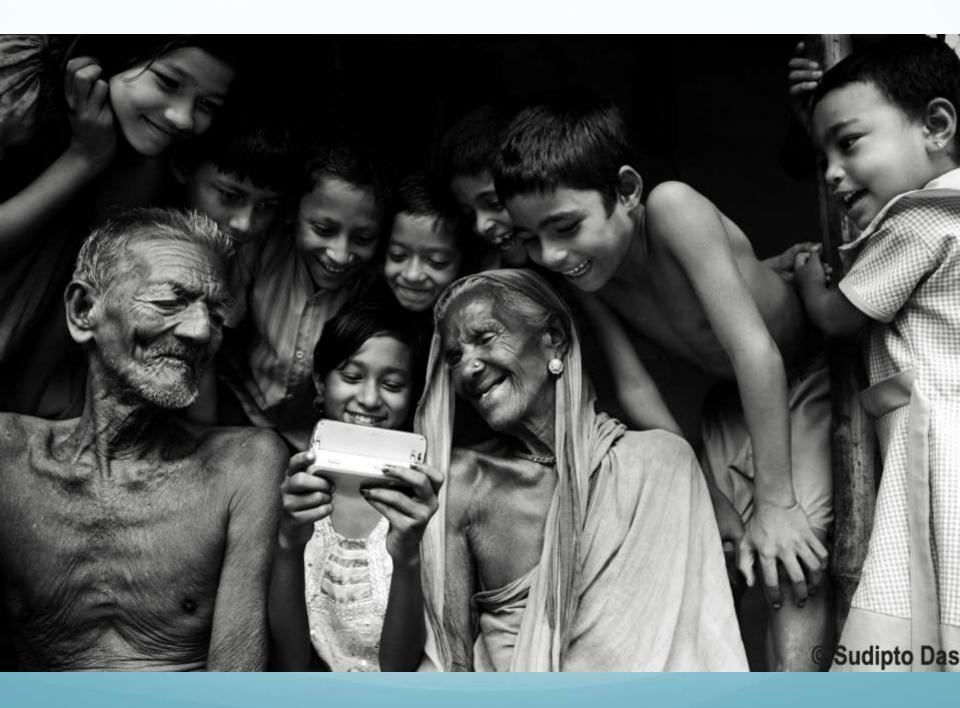
- 2500 Educational conferences and meetings
- 3000 reached through public media and publications
- Improved access to physical infrastructures due to specific access initiatives
- 700 involved with planning for AF work
- Planning maps distributed to 1200
- Took-kit for AF work created/distributed to 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



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:

