

# Dongdaemun-gu, Seoul : 2nd Cycle Diagnosis for Age-Friendly City

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**To:** WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC)

**Submitted by:** Senior Welfare Division, Dongdaemun-gu District Office

## 1. Purpose of Assessment

This assessment aims to evaluate the outcomes of Dongdaemun-gu's 1st Cycle (2022–2025) Age-Friendly City initiative and analyze shifts in the policy environment following the district's transition into a super-aged society. This diagnosis serves as a systematic **Baseline** for the 2nd Cycle (2026–2029) Action Plan, providing evidence-based data to establish effective future strategies by reviewing current policy structures and local conditions.

## 2. Local Context & Ageing Profile

**Official Entry into a Super-Aged Society:** As of 2025, the elderly population reached **71,456 (20.5%)**, officially marking the transition into a super-aged society. In particular, the "late-elderly" population (aged 80 and over) has surged to 16,533, leading to an exponential increase in the demand for integrated care and management.

**Highest Elderly Population Density in Seoul:** Dongdaemun-gu has the highest density of elderly residents per unit area among all autonomous

districts in Seoul. This demographic structure necessitates a **"Micro-level Policy Design"** focused on walking-distance accessibility within residential zones rather than large-scale, centralized facilities.

**Vulnerability in Household and Housing:** The proportion of elderly single-person households has reached **20.2%**. Vulnerable groups are concentrated in low-rise, aging residential areas such as Jegi-dong and Cheongnyangni-dong, which increases the risk of social isolation and safety accidents.

**Safety Indicators:** Seniors account for over 30% of all pedestrian accidents in the district. This underscores the urgent need for continuous improvements in transportation and residential infrastructure.

### 3. Resident Engagement & Methodology

To enhance policy relevance, Dongdaemun-gu conducted two core studies that institutionalized resident participation beyond simple opinion gathering.

#### ① Welfare Needs Survey (N=335)

**-Period & Target:** March–April 2025; 335 elderly residents in Dongdaemun-gu.

**-Core Findings:** Confirmed the need for expanded digital literacy support for daily life.

##### A. Life Status and Interests

• **Daily Routine:** Residents spend the most time on "Leisure and Exercise (42.7%)," followed by "Socializing with friends and acquaintances (19.7%)" and "Work (14.6%)."

• **Key Interests:** The top priority is overwhelmingly **"Maintaining and**

**Improving Physical Health (66.9%),"** while the second priority is "Leisure activities and hobbies (37.3%)."

• **Life Difficulties:** The most significant challenges are "**Health (illness, aging: 37.8%)**" and "**Economic issues (living expenses, etc.: 10.3%)**."

## **B. Digital Inclusion and Smart Service Needs**

• **Device Learning:** The highest demand is for "Smartphone usage (56.7%)," followed by "Kiosk usage (12.5%)."

• **Smart Health Care:** There is a clear preference for "Health monitoring via smartphone apps (34.3%)" and "Data-driven customized exercise programs (21.5%)," supporting the necessity of a "Digital-based Health Management Platform."

## **C. Social Participation and Rights Protection**

• **Desired Programs:** High willingness to participate in "Social activities such as elderly jobs (29.6%)" and "Volunteering such as meal service (19.7%)," indicating a trend toward an active lifestyle.

• **Rights Protection:** Respondents emphasized the need for "Awareness campaigns for respect and consideration toward the elderly (31.6%)" and "Intergenerational integration programs (29.3%)."

## **D. Welfare Infrastructure and Perception**

• **Service Usage:** **54.3% of respondents have never used elderly welfare services,** highlighting the need for active promotion and improved accessibility.

• **Mobility and Convenience:** Descriptive feedback revealed a **strong demand for shuttle bus operations** and specific stops at key locations (e.g., Imun 1-dong, Yongsin-dong Community Center).

• **Role of Welfare Centers:** Respondents hope future centers will focus on "Functional recovery and health management support (23.0%)" and "Education, culture, and leisure (16.1%)."

## ② Focus Group Interviews (FGI) with 137 Senior Centers

**-Period & Target:** August 2025; 1:1 in-depth interviews with management (Presidents/Secretaries) of all 137 senior centers in the district.

**-Core Findings:**

**Surge in Demand for 4 Core Life Domains (Meals, Health, Transport, Digital):** Senior centers are evolving into "Life-Support Hubs." Notably, over 65% of users strongly hope for **"5-day-a-week meal support."**

**•Preference for Participatory Welfare:** Confirmed a shift from passive beneficiary-oriented welfare to a structure where seniors directly participate in management.

**•Operational Gaps:** Reorganizing the meal assistant system and expanding operational support were identified as priority tasks.

## 4. Detailed Diagnosis by Domain (Reorganized into 6 Domains)

WHO's 8 domains were reorganized into 6 domains tailored to the specific context of Dongdaemun-gu.

Domain	Baseline Diagnosis & Current Status
S o c i a l Participation & Employment	The foundation for employment (3,378 participants) is stable, but over 45% of "New Seniors" desire to utilize their professional expertise. A structural shift from simple labor to <b>Social Service Jobs</b> is urgent.
Communication & Information (Digital Access)	While infrastructure like "Smart Senior Centers" is growing, the kiosk usage rate for those aged 80+ is only 9.7%. Continuous, repetitive learning systems are essential to prevent digital exclusion from becoming a threat to survival.

<b>Respect &amp; Social Inclusion</b>	Institutional frameworks are established, but public awareness remains low. Focus must shift to recognizing seniors as " <b>Community Mentors</b> " through intergenerational exchange and resident-led governance.
<b>Community Support &amp; Health Care</b>	Demand for integrated care is rising due to the surge in single-person households. A system is needed to include the <b>91.5% of seniors who do not currently use senior centers</b> .
<b>Mobility &amp; Transportation</b>	Accessibility gaps to medical and welfare facilities persist. Economic and physical support (e.g., addressing <b>transportation costs and pedestrian safety</b> ) must be implemented simultaneously.
<b>Housing &amp; Environment</b>	Significant gaps in housing stability exist in aging residential areas. A transition to <b>Universal Design</b> (e.g., safety handrails) is urgent, viewing housing as a " <b>Continuum of Daily Life</b> ."

## 5. Strategic Direction for Cycle 2

This baseline assessment proves that Dongdaemun-gu must overcome the challenges of a super-aged society through "**Quality Innovation in Living Zones**." The 2nd Cycle Action Plan will focus on four key pillars:

**Strengthening Health-Centered Care:** Providing integrated services combining "Meals, Health, and Care" and expanding meal support to 120 senior centers.

**Closing the Digital Gap:** Expanding Smart Senior Centers to 73 locations and institutionalizing education for daily digital technologies (app

monitoring, kiosks).

**Removing Mobility Barriers:** Improving the physical environment and providing bus fare support based on resident demands for shuttle buses and pedestrian safety.

**Expertise-Based Employment:** Increasing the proportion of social service-oriented jobs that utilize professional expertise to satisfy the needs of the "New Senior" generation.