

## LETTER FROM THE MAYOR OF BUK-GU DISTRICT

To the World Health Organization:

*Greetings to the officials of WHO Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities!*

*I am Mun, In, the Mayor of Buk-gu District, Gwangju Metropolitan City, which values peace, democracy, human rights, and a human-centered autonomous community.*

*Since joining the WHO Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities in 2023, Buk-gu has devoted its best efforts under the vision and slogan **“Age-Friendly Buk-gu Where Seniors Can Live Happier Lives!”** to realize the core values of age-friendly cities. Building on the achievements of Phase 1, we now apply for Phase 2 Age-Friendly City certification.*

*As of November 2025, the proportion of the population aged 65 and older in Buk-gu has reached 20%, firmly establishing us as a super-aged society. To address this demographic change, we have continued to make the following efforts:*

### ***1. Phase 1 Age-Friendly City Achievements***

*We systematically implemented 95 projects across eight WHO domains, achieving high implementation rates of 93.5% in 2024 and 82.9% in 2025. Notably, we achieved outstanding quantitative and qualitative results, including the establishment of 40 smart senior centers (100% operational rate), the provision of 8,862 senior jobs annually (106% target achievement rate), and support for 4,089 participants in Individualized Support Services for Older Adults' Independent Living (93% utilization rate).*

### ***2. Resident Participation-Based Phase 2 Planning***

*In July-August 2025, we conducted a large-scale needs assessment with 801 residents aged 60 and older to identify genuine community needs. Based on the survey results, we selected approximately 80 implementation projects for Phase 2 (2026-2030), with particular emphasis on qualitative improvement in civic participation and employment, where satisfaction remained low.*

### ***3. Strengthened Inter-Sectoral Collaboration***

*We have established a system where 18 departments collaborate on projects across eight WHO domains, and strengthened public-private-academic governance centered on the Age-Friendly City Steering Committee. A monitoring team composed of senior welfare practitioners and residents interested in senior welfare actively participates in policy planning processes, ensuring resident-centered policies.*

#### **4. Phase 2 Priority Directions**

*Moving beyond Phase 1's quantitative expansion, Phase 2 will focus on qualitative improvement and innovation that residents can tangibly experience. Based on needs assessment results, we will prioritize substantial improvement in civic participation and employment, the areas with the lowest satisfaction, and concentrate on strengthening intergenerational integration, digital accessibility, and living environment improvements. To achieve these goals, we have established our Phase 2 vision as **"Shining as One, Age-Friendly Buk-gu"** We will introduce new initiatives including intergenerational digital education programs, senior talent-sharing programs, and a mobility convenience roadmap application for transportation-vulnerable groups, enabling seniors to move beyond being passive program participants to become active community contributors who expand their roles and participation through diverse activities.*

#### **5. Realizing WHO Values**

*We are making the following efforts to realize the core values of age-friendly cities proposed by WHO. To realize the value of **"Active Aging,"** we provide diverse cultural, leisure, and lifelong learning opportunities for older adults and pursue qualitative improvement in senior employment. To realize the value of **"Aging in Place,"** we create safe residential environments and strengthen integrated care services, supporting seniors to continue living in their familiar communities. To realize the value of **"Intergenerational Integration,"** we are creating inclusive environments where all generations, including older adults, can live together harmoniously.*

## **6. Contribution to the Global Network**

*Building on the experiences and achievements of Phase 1, we will actively share our best practices with GNAFCC member cities. We will facilitate knowledge exchange among Korean and Asian cities, and document and provide our large-scale needs assessment methodology, smart technology application cases, and cross-sectoral collaboration mechanisms.*

## **7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement**

*Buk-gu will continue developing and implementing innovative projects to ensure residents feel satisfied with age-friendly city initiatives. Through international exchange and learning via the global network, we will develop into a world-class age-friendly city.*

*Buk-gu District pledges to do its utmost to create an age-friendly city where all generations, including seniors, can thrive together. We hereby apply for recertification under the WHO Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC) for Phase 2.*

*Thank you.*

*December 2025.*

**Mun, In**



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*Mayor, Buk-gu District, Gwangju Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea*