Cycle2

Baseline Assessment

Eumseong-Gun Age-Friendly Index Analysis

1. Analysis of the Current Status and Conditions of Eumseong-Gun's Aging Population

1) Demographic Aspect

◦ Looking at the status of the elderly population by city and county, Cheongju has the largest number among the 11 administrative districts (151,061), followed by Chungju (53,128) and Jecheon (37,074). Eumseong-Gun (25,363 people) was found to have the fourth-largest elderly population.

◦ Eumseong-Gun has a high proportion of the elderly population, accounting for 26.9% of the total population, and is currently experiencing hyper-aging, so appropriate measures are needed.

- Boeun County (42.4%) 〉 Goesan County (41.6%) 〉 Danyang County (40.5%) 〉 Yeongdong County (40.0%) 〉 Okcheon County (36.6%) 〉 Jecheon City (29.0%) 〉 Eumseong County (26.9%) 〉 Chungju City (25.7%) 〉 Jeungpyeong County (23.1%) 〉 Jincheon County (20.5%) 〉 Cheongju City (17.6%)

◦ In 2019, Eumseong-Gun was already found to have entered a super-aged society as the elderly population exceeded 20% of the total population; while the population aged 0–14 and the economically active population (ages 15–64) are decreasing each year, the elderly population (aged 65 and

above) is steadily increasing.

◦ From 2015 to 2019, the number of elderly people living alone showed a continuous upward trend, and the number of elderly women living alone was found to be higher than that of elderly men.

2) Physical Aspect

◦ Compared with other cities and counties in Chungcheongbuk-do, Eumseong-Gun showed a high satisfaction rate of 60.92% for infrastructure such as water and sewage systems, city gas, and roads, whereas satisfaction with housing (55.34%) and parking within residential areas (51.02%) was measured as average compared with other cities and counties.

◦ Among the reasons for dissatisfaction with current residence in Eumseong-Gun, the greatest was a lack of convenience facilities (30.0%), followed by inconvenient transportation (23.3%), a lack of cultural facilities (18.1%), and poor housing conditions (16.9%)

◦ Compared with other cities and counties in Chungcheongbuk-do, Eumseong-Gun showed higher satisfaction with city buses (59.26%) and airplanes (52.42%), but lower satisfaction with railways (41.00%). Satisfaction with intercity and express buses (52.18%) and taxis (58.85%) was measured as an average compared with other cities and counties.

◦ The survey on Eumseong-Gun's pedestrian satisfaction showed that 51.1% responded that they were satisfied, with 12.7% very satisfied and 38.4% somewhat satisfied.

- However, the proportion of 'very dissatisfied' residents was the highest among cities and counties in Chungbuk, indicating that improvements are

needed to address some residents' inconveniences regarding the pedestrian environment

◦ Looking at the area of urban park development, there was an overall downward trend from 2019 to 2022, but it increased in 2023 and then slightly decreased again in 2024

◦ A comparative survey of households among seniors aged 65 and older in the national, Chungcheongbuk-do, and Eumseong-Gun provinces showed a high proportion of those living in detached houses or apartments.

◦ In Chungcheongbuk-do, 54.0% of elderly households lived in detached houses, the highest proportion, followed by 37.4% living in apartments. In Eumseong-Gun, the order was the same: apartments (62.8%) followed by detached houses (26.9%), with a slightly higher proportion of residents living in detached houses compared to Chungcheongbuk-do.

◦ Upon checking apartment ownership by age group over 60, it was found that 13.1% of people aged 60–69 own apartments, with 50.4% of them being men and 49.6% being women. Among those aged 70–79, 6.6% own apartments, with 47.2% of men and 52.8% of women owning them; among those 80 and older, 14.7% own apartments, with 39.7% of men and 60.3% of women owning them

◦ Overall, except for those aged 60–69, the proportion of women owning apartments was found to be higher than that of men, and 18.2% of the elderly population in Eumseong-Gun were confirmed to own apartments.

3) Socio-Cultural and Economic Environment Aspect

◦ According to the labor and income indicators by city and county in Chungcheongbuk-do, Eumseong-Gun ranked first in Chungcheongbuk-do with a labor satisfaction rate of 65.21%, second in wage satisfaction at 56.74%, first in job sufficiency at 53.99%, first in work environment satisfaction at 65.64%, first in working hours satisfaction at 63.52%, first in overall job satisfaction at 65.41%, third in income satisfaction at 51.09%, and fifth in consumption satisfaction at 51.09%

◦ As a result of investigating priority areas for job creation by city and county in Chungcheongbuk-do, job creation projects accounted for the highest proportion at 28.7% in Eumseong-Gun, followed by employment placement (28.5%), vocational training (12.1%), startup support (11.8%), business support (10.5%), reduction of household burdens (7.9%), and others (0.5%)

◦ A survey on job availability by city and county in Chungcheongbuk-do showed that in Eumseong-Gun, 43.4% responded 'yes,' 27.4% 'average,' and 29.2% 'no.'

- Notably, the proportion of 'yes' responses was the highest among the 11 cities and counties in Chungbuk, while the 'no' response rate was relatively low at 29.2%, indicating a high positive perception of job availability

◦ A total of 13 senior clubs are operating in Chungcheongbuk-do, and one is operating in Eumseong-Gun, according to the survey.

◦ A survey on attendance at cultural and artistic events by city and county in Chungcheongbuk-do showed that in Eumseong-Gun, 61.0% of respondents

said they had not attended any events in the past year, which was higher than the 39.0% who said they had.

◦ According to a survey on satisfaction with leisure facilities by city and county in Chungcheongbuk-do, in Eumseong-Gun, 43.3% were dissatisfied, 31.3% were neutral, and 25.4% were satisfied; among the 11 cities and counties in Chungbuk, it ranked third highest in the rate of dissatisfaction.

◦ Notably, the dissatisfaction rate was 17.9 percentage points higher than the satisfaction rate (25.4%), indicating that residents hold relatively strong negative views of leisure facilities.

◦ Among those dissatisfied with leisure facilities, the survey found that Eumseong-Gun had the highest proportion of dissatisfaction with performance facilities at 50.6%, followed by local cultural welfare facilities (17.4%), sports facilities (15.5%), exhibition facilities (11.8%), library facilities (3.4%), and others (1.2%)

4) Information-Based Community Health Care Environment Aspect

◦ As of 2023, out of Eumseong-Gun's total population of 91,236, 23,968 are aged 65 or older, accounting for 26.27% of the total population; among them, 17,278 receive the basic pension, making up 72.09% of the senior population aged 65 and above.

◦ As of 2024, the number of basic pension recipients was broken down by gender, showing that out of a total population of 17,278 in Eumseong-Gun, 7,328 (65.51%) were men and 9,950 (77.84%) were women.

◦ As of 2019, the survey on the scale of recipients of the National Basic Livelihood Security showed that out of a total population of 5,175

receiving benefits in Eumseong-Gun, 969 are elderly people living alone, of whom 374 (38.6%) are men and 595 (61.4%) are women.

◦ The importance of elderly care services was highest for 'emergency safety care services' at 70.5 points, followed by 'mobility and outing support services' (67.9 points) and 'household support services' (66.0 points), indicating a high need for safety and support in daily living.

◦ Service satisfaction was highest for the 'care cost support service' at 83.3 points, followed by the 'emergency safety care service' (81.8 points) and the 'household support service' (81.3 points), indicating relatively higher satisfaction with financial support and safety-related services.

◦ The most common experience of inconvenience regarding elderly care services was support for using care facilities and services (11.1%), followed by mobility and outing support services (10.0%), support for care costs (8.3%), and household support services (4.8%)

◦ Although most services were found to have no experience of inconvenience, the reasons for experiencing inconvenience were identified as lack of service information, absence of appropriate services, distance and transportation issues, cost burden, and low service quality.

◦ The urgency of the policies was highest for elderly care (59.0), followed by child care (58.1), care for people with disabilities (56.1), multicultural families (56.0), protection and safety (55.3), and maintaining basic living standards (54.1)

◦ A total of 465 senior-related facilities were identified in Eumseong-Gun, Chungcheongbuk-do; among them, 409 were senior centers, which accounted for the largest proportion.

◦ Reviewing the status of welfare facilities for persons with disabilities in Eumseong-Gun, it has been confirmed that a total of 11 facilities are in operation: 4 residential facilities, 4 community rehabilitation facilities, and 3 vocational rehabilitation facilities.

◦ Eumseong-Gun is home to a variety of medical institutions, including clinics, hospitals, and long-term care hospitals, with a concentration of medical facilities centered around Eumseong-eup and Geumwang-eup, creating a favorable infrastructure for residents to access medical services and receive health-related support. In addition, health institutions are distributed throughout the region, providing a foundation to support residents' health management and access to healthcare services.

2. Checklist-Based Field Observation Survey

1) Survey Overview and Content

◦ To advance Eumseong-Gun's second phase of becoming an age-friendly city, a field observation survey using the WHO Age-Friendly Cities checklist was conducted targeting senior citizens, social welfare workers (practitioners), and public officials.

◦ The survey targeted social welfare workers and public officials who have a good understanding of local conditions, as well as retired seniors and elderly individuals actively engaged in social activities who use welfare facilities.

- A total of 65 respondents participated in the survey, with age distribution

as follows: 20 (30.8%) aged 20–39, 16 (24.6%) aged 40–59, and 29 (44.6%) aged 60 and above; occupations were public officials (24, 36.9%), welfare agency workers (12, 18.5%), students (1.5%), retired seniors (18, 27.7%), and others (10, 15.4%)

◦ The survey results derive implications by distinguishing the responses of all participants from those of the elderly, welfare workers, and public officials, comprehensively analyzing differences in perception among groups, and presenting the importance of each area and areas needing improvement.

◦ This survey was conducted to provide a reference for developing detailed area-specific improvement tasks based on the WHO Age-Friendly Cities Guidelines, to be used by practitioners and senior citizens.

2) Checklist Survey Results

(1) Overall Response Status and Analysis Results

◦ The results of this survey are based on a 5-point scale from 65 responses, and the scores for each domain are the averages of the questions in that domain. Lower scores are interpreted as the respondent evaluating their current conditions as relatively low.

◦ The implications derived from the area-specific scores of all respondents are as follows.

- It is necessary to prioritize the improvement of the residential environment. Among the eight areas, residential environment stability had the lowest average score of 3.30. In particular, housing maintenance costs and support services (3.15 points), in-housing safety structures (3.22

points), and improvements and subsidy support for aging housing (3.22 points) scored low. It is necessary to examine the burden of housing costs for the elderly, fall prevention, and support for repairing aging homes together

- Transportation needs to focus on the gap between fare evaluation and actual user convenience. The appropriateness of public transportation fares (4.23 points) and the operation of special transportation services (4.09 points) were highly rated, whereas access to bus stops and convenience facilities (3.29 points) were rated low. In the future, it is necessary to identify actual inconveniences during travel, such as the distance from home to the stop, boarding and alighting convenience, and information facilities
- There is a need to review emergency medical care and community safety as detailed tasks. The emergency medical system (3.31 point), as well as the CCTV and blind spots in outdoor spaces and buildings (3.38 point), received relatively low evaluations. Since the response variability is relatively large for both questions, it is necessary to further examine whether there are differences in facility status and service accessibility by town and township
- There is a need to expand participation opportunities while maintaining the existing leisure and educational infrastructure. Among the eight areas, leisure and social activities scored the highest average of 3.81, and educational opportunities for the elderly (3.91) were also highly rated. However, it is difficult to conclude that all older adults use the services equally based on these results alone. It is necessary to separately assess the participation conditions for elderly individuals with mobility

difficulties or those who have difficulty accessing information

(2) Survey Status and Analysis Results of Respondents Aged 60 and Over

◦ In the area-specific score survey of seniors aged 60 and over, leisure and social activities scored the highest at 3.93, while housing stability scored the lowest at 3.20. The following may be presented as policy review tasks from the perspective of the elderly

- Priority needs to be given to inspecting housing safety and support for aging housing. The ratings for improving older housing and providing subsidies (3.00), housing maintenance costs and support services (3.07), and fall- and slip-prevention structures within homes (3.07) were low. It is necessary to specifically identify the accessibility of housing repair support and the demand for safety facility installations
- It is necessary to verify the emergency response system. The emergency medical system question scored 2.93, the lowest among all 66 questions. It is necessary to check whether there are any difficulties during emergency contact, on-site dispatch, or coordination with medical institutions for elderly individuals living alone or those with mobility impairments
- It is necessary to examine the actual conditions of use in terms of job availability and mobility convenience. The social participation and employment domain scored 3.43, while the startup/self-employment opportunities (3.14) and employment information (3.25) domains scored lower. In the transportation sector, the evaluation of stop accessibility and convenience facilities (3.17) was lower than that of fare appropriateness (4.21), indicating that it is important not only whether the service exists

but also whether it is actually easy for elderly users to use

- It is necessary to continue the leisure and educational infrastructure, which has been positively evaluated. The evaluation in the leisure and social activities area was the highest, with high scores in providing information on leisure activities (4.03) and educational opportunities for the elderly (4.00). It is necessary to examine the issues of mobility and access to information for older adults who have difficulty participating, while maintaining existing programs

◦ In addition, the elderly raised the need to expand medical facilities, improve job opportunities and mobility convenience, broaden opportunities for cultural and sports activities, and foster a culture of mutual respect.

- In the medical field, there were opinions that specialized physical therapy facilities are insufficient in Eumseong-eup compared to the demand for treatment of musculoskeletal disorders among elderly people engaged in agriculture, and that a general hospital is needed
- Opinions were also presented on the need to expand public work programs, increase transportation and bus routes for those relocating to other regions, improve access to welfare centers and senior clubs, and expand opportunities for diverse cultural activities and sports facilities such as swimming pools.

(3) Survey Status and Analysis Results of Welfare Institution Workers

◦ According to the sector-specific score survey of welfare workers, social participation and employment (3.71) and social respect and inclusion

(3.70) were relatively high, while housing stability (3.31) and external environment and facilities (3.37) were low. Based on this, the following tasks can be reviewed.

- It is necessary to prioritize the safety inspection of elderly pedestrians. Pedestrian walkway safety and wheelchair accessibility, as well as outdoor spaces/building CCTV and blind spots, scored the lowest among all items at 2.67. Road facility management and operation also scored only 2.92. It is necessary to conduct on-site inspections of obstacles, road surface conditions, lighting, and security facilities around welfare facilities and along routes frequently used by the elderly
- It is necessary to examine housing cost burdens and housing safety support together. Housing maintenance costs and support services (3.08) and anti-fall/slip structures (3.17) scored low. It is necessary to review ways to identify housing safety needs during the provision of welfare services and connect them to support for home repairs and the installation of safety facilities when needed
- It is necessary to verify the staffing for leisure programs. Leisure program instructors were rated low, at 3.09. There are 11 valid responses to this question. It is necessary to assess not only the number of programs but also the availability of instructors and the feasibility of their continued operation
- It is necessary to improve the user journey while maintaining the strengths of the existing service. The appropriateness of public transportation fares (4.42) was highly rated, but accessibility to stops and convenience of use scored 3.25. It is necessary to examine both the walking routes to stops and guidance facilities to ensure that positive evaluations of usage costs

translate into actual convenience of travel

(4) Public Official Response Status and Analysis Results

◦ In the area-specific score survey for public officials, 24 respondents rated an average of 3.5 or higher across all eight areas. Among these, social participation and employment scored the highest (4.01), while housing stability scored the lowest (3.57)

- Housing support is also an area that requires relatively more improvement in the responses of public officials. Housing maintenance costs and support services, and housing supply for the elderly and people with disabilities scored the lowest among all items at 3.38 points. There is a need to assess the accessibility of housing cost support and the conditions for supplying housing suitable for the elderly
- It is necessary to examine the performance of transportation operations and interregional mobility convenience separately. The operation of special transportation services (4.29) and the appropriateness of public transportation fares (4.25) were highly rated, whereas public transportation connectivity to neighboring areas (3.46) and convenience of access to and use of bus stops (3.54) were relatively low. It is necessary to review route connectivity between regions and the conditions for travel to the stops
- Social participation and job policies need to be verified through actual participation experiences. Public officials gave high evaluations for participation in planning job policies for the elderly (4.25) and provision of employment information (4.13). However, since this cannot be equated with the perceived impact on the elderly users of the policy, it is necessary

to verify whether the information reaches them and leads to participation

- The differences in perception between groups need to be reflected in subsequent analysis. The average score for social participation and employment among respondents aged 60 and over, as previously analyzed, was 3.43, which was lower than the 4.01 scored by civil servants. Rather than concluding this as a difference in policy effectiveness, it is more appropriate to use it as a basis for confirming, through interviews and field surveys, the difficulties that elderly people actually face during the application and usage process

(5) Response Status and Analysis Results for Each Area by Group

◦ Analysis of the average values for each area by group showed that the living environment is an area requiring priority review for all three groups. Stability of the living environment was the lowest among the areas evaluated by all three groups. In particular, respondents aged 60 and above rated it at 3.20. It is necessary to investigate both the actual demand for repairing aging housing, fall prevention facilities, and housing cost support, and the conditions for their use

◦ There is a gap between the provider's evaluation and the elderly's perception of job policy. In the areas of social participation and employment, the scores were 4.01 for public officials, 3.71 for welfare workers, and 3.43 for those aged 60 and above. The employment information question also showed a large gap, with scores of 4.13, 3.83, and 3.25, respectively. In addition to providing policies or information, it is necessary to monitor the process through which older adults access information and engage in actual job participation.

◦ The low evaluation of the walking and security environment among welfare service workers warrants attention. The external environment and facilities area scored 3.37 for welfare workers, 0.48 points lower than the 3.85 for public officials. In particular, pedestrian road safety and wheelchair mobility convenience scored 2.67 for welfare workers and 3.75 for public officials, while CCTV and blind spots scored 2.67 and 3.71, respectively. There is a need to conduct on-site inspections of the areas surrounding welfare facilities and the main mobility routes of the elderly.

◦ Emergency response needs to be further verified with a focus on the experiences of older adults. The emergency medical system item scored 2.93 for those aged 60 and above, which is lower than 3.50 for welfare agency workers and 3.75 for public officials. It is necessary to check not only the current status of the emergency service system but also whether the elderly know how to contact help and feel they can receive assistance in an emergency.

3. Recommendations for Improving Core Business Areas

1) Improvement Plan for the Core Business Areas

◦ Voice-Enabled Integrated Care for Seniors

- Since integrated care for the elderly with hearing impairments is a project that connects 'medical → discharge → home care → home health → care → housing,' rather than a simple elderly welfare service, it needs to be designated and expanded as a core project of the second phase

◦ Senior Center Fall Prevention and Safety Environment Project

- In the second phase, the program should not end at senior centers but be expanded to the actual housing of the elderly

◦ Customized Equipment Upgrade for Senior Centers

- This project risks becoming a typical "output-driven" project
- Saying "equipment was supplied to how many locations" is hard to consider an achievement; the real achievement is "how much user satisfaction and senior center usage increased through the equipment.
- After conducting a demand survey, equipment with low actual usage should be excluded from support, and the equipment should be reorganized to focus on health, safety, and digital-related devices

◦ Renovation of Senior Centers

- Improvement of aging facilities is necessary
- However, in the second phase, age-friendly design should be applied rather than simple facility repairs
- For example, it is necessary to consider bundling features such as threshold removal, anti-slip treatment, improved lighting, bathroom handrails, rest areas, heating and cooling, and emergency call systems into a single package

◦ Customized Elderly Care Service

- Since this project is already being operated as a separate senior welfare project, it is essential to check whether there is any overlap with the 45 senior-friendly city projects
- It is necessary to review ways to fully connect with integrated care to establish a linkage system among 'elderly customized care recipients → high-risk group screening → home health → medical care → integrated

care.'

- Emergency Safety and Security Service for Elderly Living Alone and People with Disabilities
- Performance evaluation should go beyond the number of deployed devices to include actual emergency discovery counts, response times, accident prevention counts, service interruption rates, and user satisfaction

◦ Voice-activated Senior Employment

- There is a need to develop this into “Senior Jobs 2.0,” a form of employment that goes beyond simple income support and addresses community issues

*Examples: Senior center safety management, welfare check-ins for elderly living alone, digital helpers, local transportation assistance, daily safety monitoring, meal support for the elderly, etc.

2) Setting Policy Priorities

◦ There is a need to distinguish between the 'Age-Friendly City Project' and the 'existing Elderly Welfare Projects.' For example, while the necessity of projects such as senior center operating expenses, water purifiers, disinfection, heating and cooling costs, and grain supplies is acknowledged, it is difficult to regard them as policy achievements of an age-friendly city

◦ In contrast, integrated care, home medical services, emergency safety, fall prevention, mobility rights, and jobs for the elderly are directly linked to the core goal of an age-friendly city: the continued residence of older

adults in their communities.

◦ The evaluation and policy priorities of Eumseong-Gun's 1st phase senior-friendly city project are as follows.

- (Be sure to enlarge) Integrated care, home health visits, hospital accompaniment, housing and fall prevention, emergency safety, senior employment
- (Maintain but improve structure) senior centers, welfare centers, senior center equipment, renovation of senior centers, and community sports
- (Decided after performance verification) Large-scale sports facilities, facility-centered projects, and event/education-centered projects
- (Integrated review in the second phase) Similar health and care projects, similar senior center support projects, and simple program/event-based projects

◦ The core achievement of Eumseong-Gun's first phase of the Age-Friendly City initiative was establishing the institutional framework of an age-friendly city and launching 45 projects; the task for the second phase is not to increase the number of projects, but to connect integrated care, mobility, housing safety, health, and social participation into a single living system and demonstrate results through real-life changes relative to the budget.

◦ In particular, Eumseong-Gun fully revised the "Ordinance on the Creation of an Age-Friendly City" in 2025, and related system improvements for the integrated care budget are also being carried out in the 2026 council materials, marking the time to transition from a simple WHO certification project to an age-friendly city based on community-integrated care.

◦ Furthermore, this can be linked to Eumseong-Gun's ongoing local health and medical plans for home-visit health care, integrated care, senior center safety, and senior employment, and elevate it to the framework for performance management of the county's overall welfare, health, transportation, and urban policies; this is the most important second-phase strategy.

◦ What Eumseong-Gun must do in the second term from 2027 to 2031 is not to simply extend the 45 projects as they are, but to integrate them into a policy package and transform the system to measure whether the budget has actually improved the lives of the elderly.

◦ In particular, integrating care → home health → hospital accompaniment → housing safety → senior centers → and senior employment into a single policy could become the most powerful model for a senior-friendly city in Eumseong-Gun.