

Development of a methodology for creating social activities run by the elderly themselves

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Increasing importance of community in hyper-aged society in Japan:

Government
cannot afford to expand social expenditure under limited budget

Family
cannot endure the burden of care (single and couple households)

Community
is expected to work as third axis to enhance the lives in old age (members help each other etc.)

Problems

- Governments and today's families cannot necessarily afford to cope with the burdens of care or the needs to live independently.
- The participation rate in traditional neighborhood and elderly associations has continued to decline. Moreover, such associations don't usually meet the needs or wants of the community-dwelling elderly (weak relationship among the members, lacked problem solving capacity etc.).
- Government doesn't have realistic means of encourage community activity.

A case in Toyoshiki-dai housing complex, Kashiwa city:

- Kashiwa city is located in northwestern Chiba Prefecture, Japan. It takes about 1 hour from central Tokyo by train.
- Toyoshiki-dai housing complex was built in 1964. Today about 5,900 people live, and 42% of them are over 65.
- Most of the residents are working or worked before in Tokyo. In working age, people haven't had enough time to interact with neighbors. This may result in the current situation where there are few social activities compared to its residents' size. And it may imply that the residents have less chances to have interactions with their neighbors.

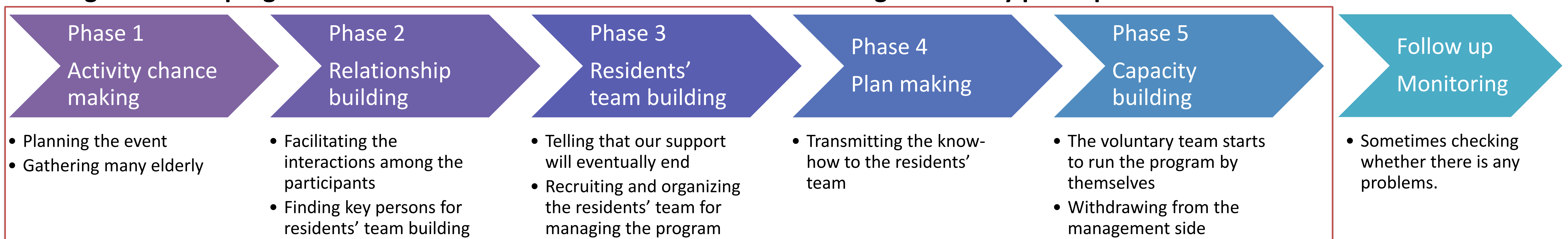


Purpose of this study:

- To develop the methodology to facilitate the community-based activities run by the elderly residents

Proposed method:

Holding a series of programs which enhance the reflective interactions among the elderly participants.

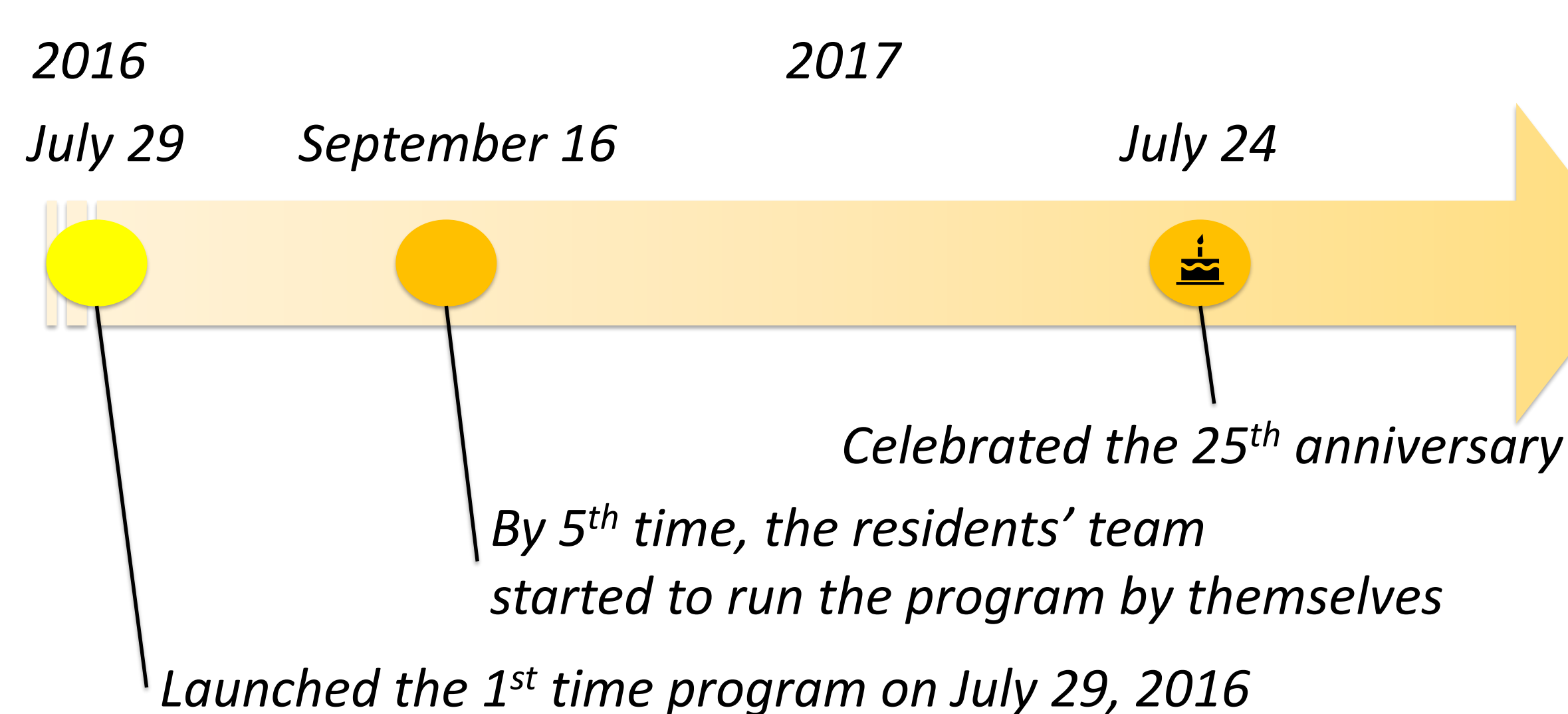


Launching 'cinema club of neighborhoods'

Program: Movie + Lunch

From 10:00 to 13:00
Once every two weeks
Many chances to talk with each other.
In workshop session, the participants discussed their wants and concerns.
Lunch and workshop session are not mandatory.
Reasonably priced fee (¥100 for movie and ¥300 for lunch)
30 to 60 participants each time

Timeline



Results and voices of the participants:

Most of the participants are late-elderly (75+).

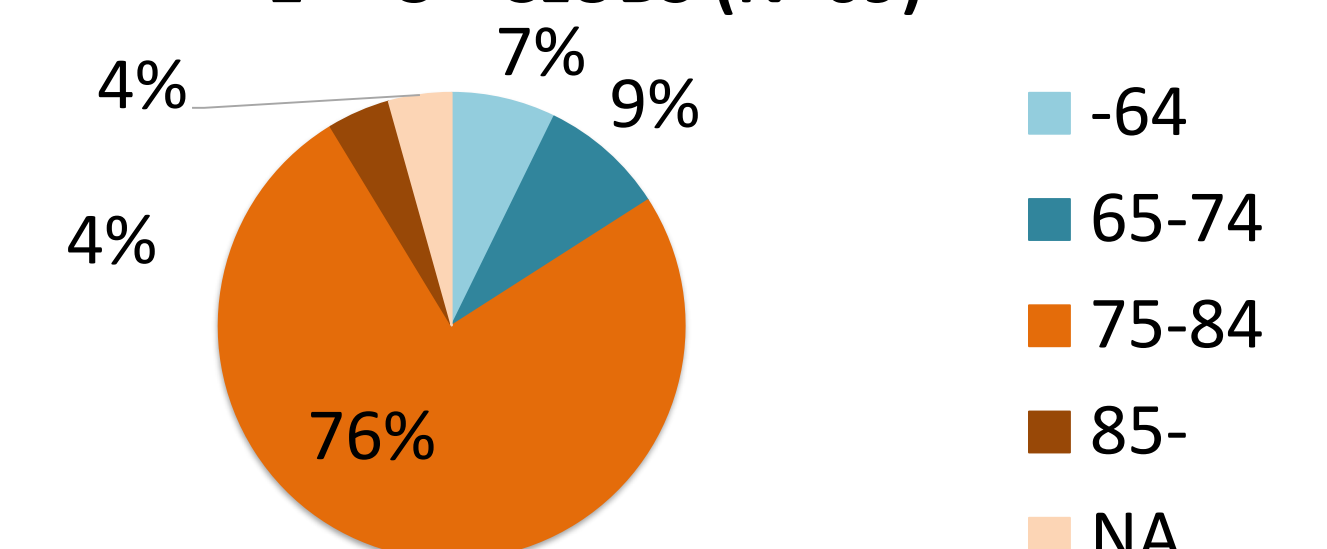
It is hard for them to go to the commercial movie theater because of physical problems. The cinema club gives them the chance of outdoor activity and improves their quality of daily life.



2. The program provides **ties in their neighborhood**. "I greet many people in these days." "We remember each other since we have been meeting in the program."



THE AGE OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN 1st ~3rd CLUBS (N=69)



1. The program gives to the participants **a reason to go out routinely**. "I check off every program's day in my calendar." "Before coming here, I had been staying at home and watching TV shows." Not a few people have joined because their friends asked them to come with.



3. The program may **change participants' feelings positively**. "It is a pleasure to work as a staff in this gathering." The face-to-face interaction among the participants gives to the team members usefulness to others.

Discussion: Why was the long-lasting residents' team formed?

- Full support phase was temporal.
- Transition phase was provided for strengthening the residents' team initiatives and enhancing the confidence to manage the program.
- Supports from our team were minimized after the team's take off.

Future work:

- Evaluation on the effects of the intervention to the participants
- Conceptualization of the facilitation methods and application to other fields