

UN-HABITAT



World Urban Forum III

**Vancouver, Canada
19-23 June 2006**

UN-HABITAT Participant Evaluation Report

Draft for comments

Acknowledgements

The preparation of this UN-HABITAT Participant Evaluation Report was based on analysis of answers to the Survey Questionnaire, which was distributed and completed by participants of World Urban Forum III in Vancouver, Canada. The survey was conducted by the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, UN-HABITAT, in collaboration with Goss Gilroy Inc., an independent consulting firm of Canada specialized in programme evaluations.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, would like to acknowledge and thank, in particular, the efforts of Goss Gilroy Inc., volunteers who helped to distribute and collect the questionnaires and all 1,151 participants that responded to the Survey Questionnaire. The unit also notes its appreciation to the UN-HABITAT evaluation team that went to Vancouver for their hard work in preparation and finalization of this report.

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The Unit hopes that the findings, lessons learned and recommendations from this report will help to improve the planning of future Forums.

Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, UN-HABITAT
September 2006

Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|------------|--|
| GC | Governing Council |
| HRSD | Human Resources and Social Development, Canada |
| ISS | Information Services Section |
| LDCs | Least Developed Countries |
| MDGs | Millennium Development Goals |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organizations |
| UN | United Nations |
| UN-HABITAT | United Nations Human Settlements Programme |
| WESS | World Economic and Social Surveys |
| WUF | World Urban Forum |

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Executive Summary

This report presents an evaluation of the Third Session of the World Urban Forum (WUF III) that took place in Vancouver, Canada, from 19-23 June 2006. It was attended by 10,121 participants from 109 countries. The report has been prepared by UN-HABITAT, which was mandated by UN General Assembly (GA resolution 56/206), to organize the World Urban Forum with a view to strengthen the coordination of international support to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. The report is the result of analysis of answers to the participant survey questionnaire. It is hoped that the assessment findings, lessons learned and recommendations will feed into programming and design; and improve the fourth session of the World Urban Forum to be held in Nanjing, China, in 2008.

The participant's survey questionnaire targeted 6,000 initially estimated participants to the forum. Questionnaires were distributed and collected at the end of the conference. A total of 1,151 participants completed and returned the survey questionnaire, representing a 19% response rate. This response rate is slightly higher (by 1%) than WUF II, which had a response rate of 18. The profile of 1,151 survey respondents somewhat differed from the profile of 10,121 actual participants. This necessitated data for analysis to be weighted, to correct for known biases. Analysis was done using statistical software of SPSS.

Overall, the results of the participant survey are positive on all questions. In terms of participation, the Forum attendance continued a growth pattern since 2002, with 125% increase over WUF II. By country groupings, developed countries had relatively higher participation (60%) followed by Developing countries (28%) and Least Developed Countries (11). The forum was gendered, with male participation at 51.8% and female 48.2%. It was also inclusive, bringing Governments, Local Authorities, civil society organizations, private sector, the media and other Habitat Agenda partners to the Forum. The NGO/Civil Society had the highest share (25.2%) of participation.

Most participants were satisfied with the forum. This is asserted by over 80% of respondents being very satisfied and satisfied with the forum in terms of timeliness of information on conference objectives, usefulness of information on the forum programme, logistics, content of WUF III websites, ease of registration, quality of facilities, communication facilities, and availability of support and assistance.

In aggregate, Some Indication of the Forum's success can be summarized as follows:

- Broad attendance in large numbers (125% increase over WUF II)
- Inclusive (balanced participation from public, private and civil society sectors compared to WUF II)
- Gender participation adequate (51.8% male, 48.2% female)
- Over 80% respondents satisfied with preparations before and during the conference
- Over 75% had their expectations met by the forum
- Over 71% respondents rated the forum useful
- 83% respondents would apply what they learnt at the forum to their local context
- 73% of respondents rated the closing of the forum as very useful or useful.
- Over 50% of additional comments thanked the organizers of the event, highlighting how the forum provided the needed motivation and inspiration to address challenges of urbanization. 73% of respondents rated the closing of the forum as very useful or useful.

- On the question of likelihood of participating in the next World Urban Forum to be held in China in 2008, 50% of respondents indicated they were very likely or likely to participate in WUF IV.

Despite the positive results, there is still need for improvement. Some of the respondents asserted that they were very dissatisfied with the forum (less than 4%); expectations were not fully met (less than 5%); the forum not useful (less than 10%) and participants unlikely to apply what they learnt (2.3%).

In the view of the above, the following recommendations are put forward for consideration. They are divided in four parts.

A. Planning: There is a need for early planning and involvement of all stakeholders working within realistic timeframes; regional preparatory meetings could be useful; ensure that women are given equal voices and that gender analysis is mainstreamed in all sessions; translation in all UN Languages in needed ; sessions to be facilitated by skilled facilitators with experience of working with diverse groups; speeches at the opening and closing sessions to be few, shorter (*Three hours of the opening and closing sessions were considered too long*); few speakers and enough time for interaction would be appropriate; WUFs provided excellent opportunities for training and more training sessions should be organized at the next forum.

B. Format: Dialogue sessions should give time for interactions and solutions to be identified; training session gave excellent opportunity for learning, continues to ensure training at the next forum; Roundtables should be organised around themes and to ensure representation of different stakeholders; exhibitions should be kept open for longer hours; participating speakers and presenters should be well prepared to address the topic; professional facilitators should be used for sessions that address contentious issues.

C. Logistics: Information on the Forum, its content and schedule of the event should be sent early; media should be adequate for all sessions (*not to concentrate only on the plenary and special sessions*); enough computer terminals should be in place to allow participants to access the internet; wireless access should also be accessible on site; transport arrangements were good and should be maintained in future forums

D. Appropriateness of the Venue

Survey results indicate that some participants had difficulties in attending their desired sessions because of space limitations. This can be attributed to popularity of certain sessions or space limitations due to high attendance than anticipated. For future forums, venues should be flexible in terms of space to accommodate unanticipated participants who by trend exceed estimated.

(For details of the evaluation, Please read the entire report).

Participants Evaluation Report of the World Urban Forum III 1923 June 2006, Vancouver, Canada

1 Introduction

In its resolution 18/5 of 16 February 2001, the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) requested the Executive Director to promote a merger of the Urban Environment Forum and the International Forum on Urban Poverty into a new urban forum, with a view of strengthening the coordination of international support to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. In December 2001 (resolution 56/206), the UN General Assembly decided that the Forum – the World Urban Forum (WUF), would be a “non-legislative technical Forum in which experts can exchange views and advise the Executive Director of UN-HABITAT on issues of shelter and sustainable urbanization. It is convened by UN-HABITAT every two years, when the Governing Council of UN-HABITAT does not meet.”¹

The first session of the WUF was held in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2002 and was attended by 1,200 participants. The second session was held in Barcelona, Spain, in September 2004 and attracted 4,389 participants. The third session which attracted 10,121 participants from 109 countries, was held in Vancouver, Canada, from 19 - 23 June 2006.

The theme of the Third Session of the WUF was “**Our Future: Sustainable Cities-Turning Ideas into Action**”. It had three sub-themes: Social Inclusion and Cohesion; Partnership and Finance; and Urban Growth and Environment. It was organized around 6 dialogues, 13 roundtables and 160 networking and training events. Participants represented a wide range of Habitat Agenda partners including governments, parliamentarians, Local Authorities, Non-Governmental Organizations, private sector, professional and research institutions, foundations and the media.

This evaluation report has been prepared as part of the Monitoring and Evaluation functions of UN-HABITAT. It is a result of analysis of answers to Participant Survey Questionnaire.² The report provides UN-HABITAT management, governing bodies and other stakeholders with the evaluative assessment of WUF III, from participants’ point of view. It is in accordance with Rules and Regulations Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation (ST/SGB/2000/8).³

2 Purpose and Scope

The main purpose of the participant evaluation was to assess the success, usefulness and relevance of WUF III. It was a self-evaluation study to find out what worked, what didn’t work and to reflect on findings and lessons learnt, through evaluative evidence, to improve future World Urban Forums.

¹ Rule 1 of Rules and procedure of the GC of UN-HABITAT (2005) specifies that the GC shall normally hold one regular session every two years.

² The information and data used in the report is based on the answers given to the survey by participants of WUF III, 19-23 June 2006, Vancouver Canada.

³ ST/SGB/2000/8 is the UN Secretary-General’s Bulletin that consolidates the General Assembly decisions on the Monitoring and Evaluation functions in the United Nations.

The participant evaluation is part of the in-depth evaluation of WUF III that was awarded to Human Resources and Social Development (HRSD) department of Canada.⁴ This particular evaluation, used the Survey Questionnaire as an assessment tool. The Questionnaire consisted of 31 closed-ended and 2 open-ended questions to assess participant satisfaction. Questions focused on gender issues; organizational affiliation; knowledge about WUF III; participant satisfaction; whether the forum met participants expectations; usefulness of forum sessions as well as suggestions/comments to improve future forums. A total of 1,151 participants completed and returned the survey Questionnaires, representing a 19% response rate. This report is the result of the analysis of answers to the Questionnaire.

3 Methodology and limitations

In order to assess participant satisfaction with the WUF III, a Survey Questionnaire was designed by UN-HABITAT in collaboration with Gross Gilroy Inc; (*Questionnaire attached as Appendix A*). The questionnaire was prepared three languages: English, French and Spanish. Distribution of the questionnaires to participants was by various ways: through “delegates bags”; placed in strategic places like networking and dialogue rooms; exhibition hall; and at the Evaluation desk. Participants were requested to complete and return the questionnaires. Volunteers assisted in distributing and collecting of completed questionnaires. At the end of the Forum, 1,151 participants had responded to the questionnaire.

Information from respondents was subsequently entered into the computer and analyzed using a statistical software of SPSS. The participant data that was used for the comparison was provided by Information Service Section (ISS), UN-HABITAT. The data was cleaned to delete duplicate records and correct any inconsistencies.⁵ A variable was constructed – “Countries level of development” to group respondents in Developed, Developing or Least Developed Countries (LDCs). The variable was based on country of residence reported by the respondent.⁶ The grouping of countries was done using UN World Economic and Social Surveys (WESS)⁷, and statistics of Least Developed Countries found on www.un.org/ohrls.

The profile of 1,151 survey respondents somewhat differed from the profile of 10,121 actual participants. This necessitated data for analysis to be weighted, to correct for known biases. Having 1,151 respondents and a total of 10,121 participants, confidence level of 95% and confidence interval of +/- 2.72 were established. In layman’s language it means if 50% of the respondents said “yes” to a question, the actual response lies between 47.28% and 52.72%.

⁴ HRSD was awarded a contract to conduct an in-depth evaluation of WUF III. It contracted Gross Gilroy Inc., an independent consulting firm specialized in programme evaluation, to conduct the in-depth evaluation on its behalf.

⁵ The participants data used was cleaned to delete duplicate records and correct any inconsistencies (e.g blank records, anomalies, etc.). Records of those who registered only for the purposes of entering the forum site (e.g., suppliers, volunteers and performers were also deleted to get “true participants” - those who were expected to complete the participant survey.

⁶ The First question on the Survey Questionnaire asked the participants the country they normally reside in.

⁷ The UN World Economic and Social Survey is the United Nations annual analysis of current developments in the world economy and emerging policy issues. It contains forecasts of short-term global and regional economic trends.

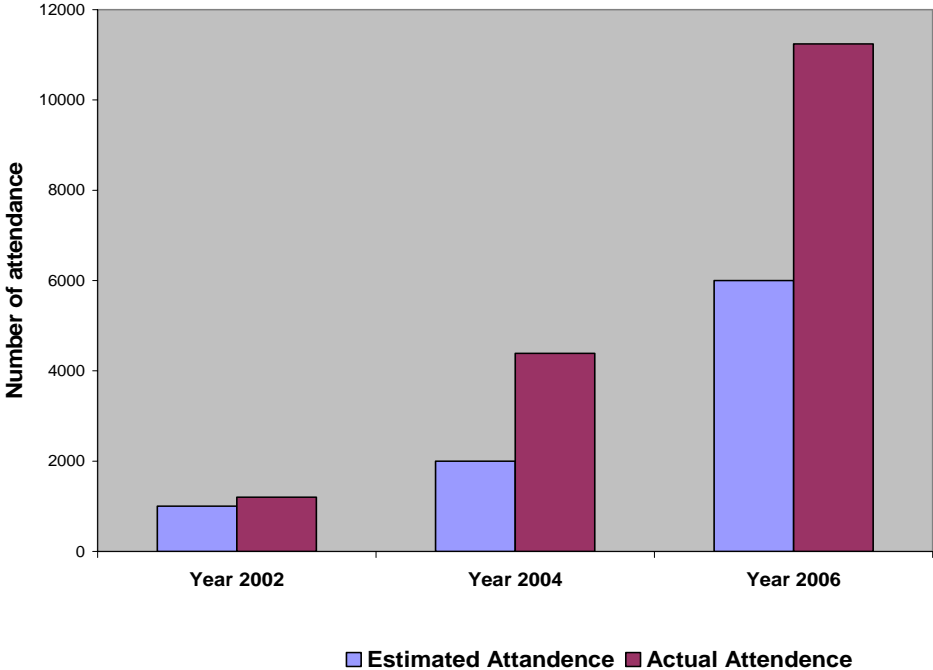
Limitations of evaluation methodology included inadequate human resources to follow-up with participants to complete and return the questionnaire and this resulted into poor response rate. There could have been limited time for participants to respond to the questionnaire as most respondents pointed out limitation of time for sessions. Although data was weighted, this does not correct for all sources of biases. For instance, some participants who may not have been pleased with the Forum may have chosen not to respond to the survey. This raises questions on the representativeness of the data and they should be interpreted with care.

4. Findings

4.0 Participation at the Forum

WUF III registered a total of 10,121 participants, excluding the support staff and volunteers, who were more than 1,000. The initial estimated number of participants to attend WUF III was 6,000. This was a 69% over the estimated participants. The trend seems ongoing. In WUF II, increase of expected participants was 124% (estimated participants were 2,000 but 4,489 was the actual attendance). Figure 1, shows attendance to the Forums since 2002.

Figure 1: Forum Attendance Rates by Year.



Although a greater number of participants than estimated may be considered good, it also presents challenges in terms of planning and logistics. Most survey respondents commented that rooms were very small relative to the number of participants; overcrowding was observed in many sessions; delegate’s materials were not available to all participants; etc. In trying to accommodate as many participants as possible there were, of course, inconveniencies and comfort was also compromised. Organizers of future Forums should take this into account when planning and choosing the venue.

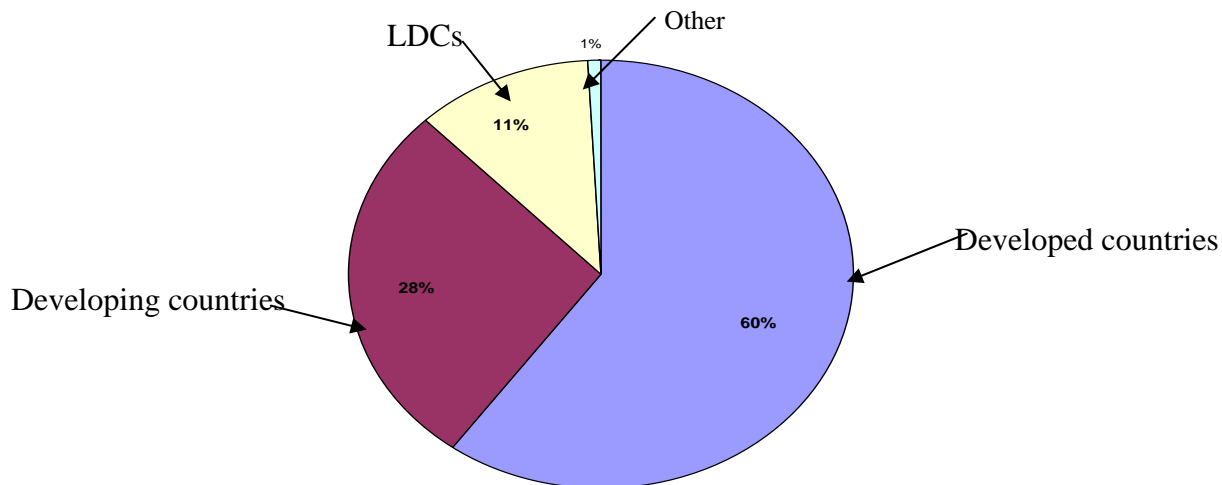
Some specific comments from respondents are as follows:

- *I believe that given the huge number of participants, the WUF3 was well organized! Congratulations! tremendous efforts put in by the organizers of this conference!*
- *It is unacceptable for a delegate who registered months in advance not to get a programme in English.*
- *You ran out of every thing! I did not attend sessions because of no programmes.*
- *The number of chairs in rooms were very limited. Could not enter some sessions because they were full.*
- *The organizers were unprepared for high number of participants. Many sessions were crowded.*
- *Need to plan for much larger turnouts than expected. This is an international event!*
- *It will be good to assess past WUF before thinking of next WUF. This is a weakness of the WUF's always looking ahead and not assessing the implementation of the recommendations of previous WUFs.*

4.1 Participation by country groups

The first question on the survey questionnaire asked participants the country they normally reside in. The country of residence was used to construct a variable -"level of development " - that was used to group countries in Developed, Developing and Least Developed Countries . Figure 2, summarizes participation by group of countries.

Figure 2: Participation by country groups



The figure indicates that developed countries had relatively higher participation (60%); followed by developing countries (28%) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs, 11%). The other (1%), represent countries which are not rated in UN World Economic and Social Survey (2003). The high percentage of developed countries is influenced by highest respondents of Canada (48%), who reported it as their country of residence.

If we consider actual participant database frequencies, Canada represents more than 50% of all participants. Table 1 below, shows actual participation of the Top Ten Countries at WUF III.

Table 1: Participation by Country –Top Ten Countries

| | Country | No. of Participants | % of the total |
|----|--|---------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Canada | 5,187 | 51.2% |
| 2 | United States of America | 626 | 6.2% |
| 3 | Mexico | 183 | 1.8% |
| 4 | South Africa | 174 | 1.7% |
| 5 | China | 163 | 1.6% |
| 6 | Kenya | 156 | 1.5% |
| 7 | Sweden | 146 | 1.4% |
| 8 | Brazil | 138 | 1.4% |
| 9 | India | 130 | 1.3% |
| 10 | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | 124 | 1.2% |

Some comments from the respondents on country representation are:

- *Where are representation from Middle Eastern countries!*
- *I think UN-HABITAT should extend sponsorship to Nigerian delegates in the next forum.*
- *I thank UN-HABITAT for helping developing countries.*
- *Coming from a developing country (Guyana) grappling with capacity, it is my opinion that more emphasis should have been placed on the training sessions both in terms of capacity and range of topics covered.*
- *There was low representation from Arab countries. Please encourage and subsidize participants from Arab countries.*
- *Topics and issues relating to LDCs should be more emphasized.*

4.2 Participation by gender

Advancing women’s equal participation with men in all of the UN-HABITAT’s interventions was also evident at the WUF III. The second survey question attempted to determine participation by gender. Table 2 summaries the responses

Table 2: Percentages of participation by gender

| Participant’s Gender | Gender | Frequency | Percentages |
|----------------------|--------|-----------|-------------|
| | Male | 592 | 51.8% |
| | Female | 551 | 48.2% |
| | Total | 1,143 | 100% |

Respondents who reported on their gender, 51.8% were male and 48.2% female. With the confidence level of 95%, gender participation of the survey is in line with actual frequencies from the participant database where male participation is 45.3% and female is 42.3%, non- response being 12.4%.

4.3 Participation in previous WUFs

The Questionnaire also asked if participants had participated in the previous WUFs. The forum drew a broad audience including both past attendees and first-time attendees to the WUF III. Table 3, summarizes the responses.

Table 3: Respondents Participation in previous WUFs

| Have you participated in previous WUFs? | Frequency | | Percent | |
|---|-----------------|--------|---------|--|
| | WUF I (Nairobi) | 39 | 3.4% | |
| WUF II (Barcelona) | 96 | 8.3% | | |
| Neither | 1,031 | 89.6% | | |
| Total | 1,151 | 101.6% | | |

Most respondents were new attendees (89.9%), who had not attended previous WUFs. 3.4% had attended WUF I and 8.3% had attended WUF II (note that percentages add up to more than 101.6 % because multiple responses were possible – some respondents had attended both WUF I and WUF II .

Some comments from respondents comparing WUF III with previous WUFs, are as follows:

- *I found WUF III more organized and inclusive than WUF II.*
- *Wonderful Summit, very organized, better than before, great work !thank you.*
- *Organizers need to be commended. Good meeting than WUF II in Barcelona.*
- *I noticed a lot of improvements in comparison to WUF II in Barcelona. Great job!*
- *I liked WUF 3 than WUF I.*
- *Organizers of dialogues and networking events should learn from organisers of Barcelona how to do it. Training session inadequate, always full. They were frustrated and disappointed.*

4.4 Participation by organization affiliation

UN-HABITAT works directly with Governments, Local Authorities, civil society organizations, private sector, the media and other partners in implementing the Habitat Agenda and UN-HABITAT work programmes. A question was asked to gather information on the types of organizations participants represented. Although not intended to be so, this question became a multiple response one, as some respondents ticked more than one response. As a result, the percentages add up to 103.7%. For this variable, it is better to use attendance of the participant database. Table 4, shows the participants by organization affiliation using the Participant Database.

Table 4: Participants by organizations affiliation

| Which of the following are you most closely affiliated to? | Frequency | | Percent | |
|--|--------------------------------------|-------|---------|--|
| | National/Provincial/State Government | 1,594 | 15.7% | |
| Local Government | 1,607 | 15.9% | | |
| Private sector | 1,353 | 13.4% | | |
| Non-governmental organization / Civil Society | 2,549 | 25.2% | | |
| Academia/Research institute | 1,261 | 12.5% | | |
| United Nations/International Organization | 383 | 3.8% | | |
| Media | 340 | 3.4% | | |
| Other | 1,034 | 10.2% | | |
| Total | 10,121 | 100% | | |

From the table, it is evident that the Forum was inclusive and ensured that Local Authorities and other Habitat Agenda Partners participated in the Forum. There was a high profile of NGO/Civil Society (25.2%), followed by Local Government and National and State Governments by 15.9% and 15.7 % respectively. The media had the lower representation of 3.4%.

It is worthy to note that Private sector participation increased from 9% in WUF II to 13.4% in WUF III. This is encouraging as the private sector is a key source of capital and expertise for local infrastructure. This may be attributed to increased awareness on shelter and sustainable urbanization issues and enhanced visibility of UN-HABITAT and Habitat Agenda issues in the media.

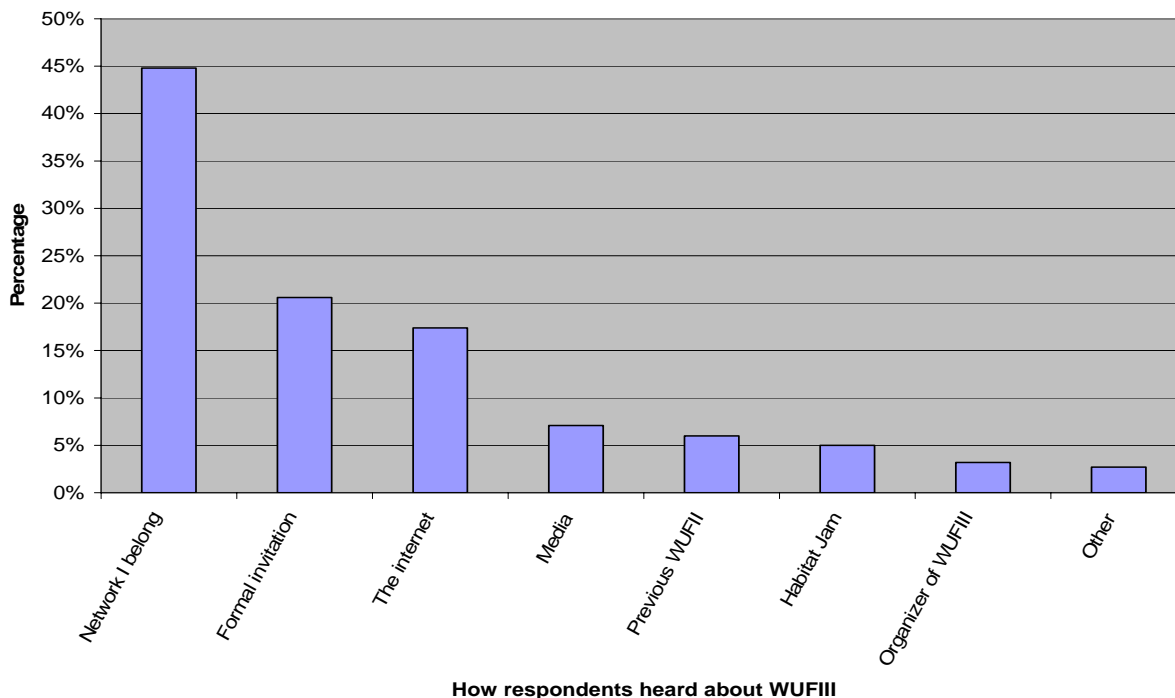
The following are some of the comments from respondents on organization representation at the forum.

- *Slum dwellers must be recognized.*
- *It seems it has become an NGO forum. Where are the Cities?*
- *WUF3 has been the richest and diverse congregation on urban issues and experiences.*
- *We from the indigenous local NGO would like to be sponsored to attend if you are working down to the grassroots.*
- *What is missing is the inclusion of religion and spirituality as vital to sustainable cities.*

4.5 Sources of hearing about the Forum

The question on hearing about the Forum was asked to assess how participants learned of the event. Eight sources were given for participants to choose from. Figure 3, shows responses in percentages.

Figure 3: Percentages of respondents on sources of learning about WUF III



This turned out to be a multiple response question, as respondents may have heard from a variety of sources. 44.8% of respondents heard from networks they belong to. The next most common source was formal invitation (20.6%). Technology is playing an increasing role in both the promotion of information and internet was the third common way of hearing about WUF III (17.4%). Respondents that heard from the media were 7.1%, and those from organizers of previous WUF in Barcelona were 6%. Respondents that heard through the Habitat-JAM were 5%. 3% heard from organizers of WUF III.

The Habitat JAM was a unique 72-hour internet event focused on solving some of the world's most critical urban issues. It took place from 1- 4 December 2005, to enable real-time dialogue and exchange among participants. It was to help facilitate a more effective and inclusive WUF III by engaging, empowering and stimulating many people with the ultimate goal of turning ideas into action on critical issues related to urban sustainability. The JAMs' low percentage may be attributed to having run for a shorter period (only three days) to allow full participation.

4.6 Participants satisfaction

A set of ten questions were asked to assess whether participants were satisfied with the Forum (before the conference and during the conference). Table 5, indicates the degree to which respondents were satisfied.

Table 5: Percentages showing how survey respondents were satisfied with the Forum

| | Very Dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Satisfied | Very Satisfied | Frequency |
|---|-------------------|--------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|
| Before the Forum: How satisfied were you with the forum in terms of: | | | | | |
| (a) Timeliness of information on conference objectives | 3.1% | 6.3% | 47.8% | 43.1% | 1,090 |
| (b) Usefulness of information on the conference programme | 2.9% | 7.4% | 42.5% | 47.3% | 1,110 |
| (c) Availability of information on the forum logistics | 3.1% | 9.3% | 44.5% | 43.1% | 1,070 |
| (d) Organization and content of WUF III websites | 2.7% | 10.2% | 44.0% | 43.2% | 1,045 |
| (e) Ease of registration online | 3.2% | 3.6% | 19.2% | 74.0% | 1,033 |
| During the Forum: How satisfied were you with the forum in terms of: | | | | | |
| (f) The ease of obtaining photo ID and badge | 3.8% | 4.3% | 21.6% | 70.4% | 1,115 |
| (g) Quality of facilities (i.e room, lighting, sound) | 3.1% | 10.2% | 36.1% | 50.6% | 1,091 |
| (h) Communication facilities (including internet access) | 3.4% | 14.7% | 44.5% | 37.4% | 956 |
| (i) Availability of support and assistance | 2.6% | 4.3% | 40.2% | 52.8% | 1,013 |
| (j) Transport logistics | 2.6% | 7.2% | 31.4% | 58.8% | 914 |

The majority of respondents were satisfied with the Forum. 91 % of respondents indicated that they were very satisfied or satisfied with the timeliness of information on conference objectives. 90% were very satisfied or satisfied with information on the conference programme. 87% were very satisfied or satisfied with the availability of information on the forum logistics and ease of registration online. Over 77% respondents were also very satisfied or satisfied with organization and content of WUF III websites. More than 80% of respondents were very satisfied or satisfied with ease of obtaining photo ID, quality of facilities, communication facilities, and availability of support and transport logistics.

However, there is a need for improvement. About 20% respondents asserted they were very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the forum arrangements before and during the conference.

Some of the comments from respondents are:

- *Information came too late. My colleagues, who would have shared their experience, were unable to get visa.*
- *Find experts of computers. How could my names not be in the database system.*
- *Next time bring more media people to cover events instead of wasting money on closing event.*
- *This is technology time. Always plan for enough computers for participants to access internet.*
- *Next time, you will be embarrassed. Thank God university students were on holiday and university accommodation was available. On earth, where could you have accommodated millions of people!*
- *Your allowance was not enough for my food. You have double standards. My friend got twice as much as I got, though we came on the same day and we are leaving with the same plane. Isn't this corruption?*
- *There should be more restaurants options, not only VCEC cafeterias*
- *Need to translate in all six languages of United Nations.*
- *Logistics during the conference, did not meet our expectations.*
- *Meeting rooms had insufficient capacity. Disappointing not to enter some events I had selected.*
- *Training session registration was a nightmare!*

4.7 Meeting participants' expectations

Eight questions were asked to assess how the forum met expectations of participants. Table 6, summarizes the responses.

Table 6: Degree on how the Forum met expectations of survey respondents

| | Not met | Somewhat met | Significantly met | Fully met | Frequency |
|--|---------|--------------|-------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Did the forum meet your expectations in terms of: | | | | | |
| (a) Relevance of topics and themes | 1.3% | 20.9% | 50.4% | 27.3% | 1,097 |
| (b) Quality of speakers and presentations | 1.8% | 21.2% | 46.8% | 30.3% | 1,077 |
| (c) Organization of events (networking events, dialogues, roundtables etc) | 3.1% | 21.1% | 44.3% | 31.5% | 1,077 |
| (d) Usefulness of information on best practices in urban sustainability | 2.9% | 25.9% | 44.3% | 27.0% | 1,042 |
| (e) Showing Canada's achievements in urban policies and strategies | 3.1% | 22.0% | 40.8% | 34.1% | 961 |
| (f) Providing at least one practical idea that you may apply in your local context | 4.9% | 16.6% | 35.5% | 43.0% | 1,064 |
| (g) Opportunities for informal participant networking and discussions | 4.5% | 20.0% | 38.4% | 37.1% | 1,053 |
| (h) The relevance of topics and themes in the context of current global issues. | 1.8% | 12.6% | 43.5% | 42.1% | 1,079 |

In aggregate, more than 75 % of respondents reported that their expectations were fully or significantly met. On the question of relevance of topics and themes, 78% of respondents had expectations significantly or fully met. The quality of speakers and presentations significantly or fully met expectations of 77% of respondents. Organization of events (networking, dialogues, and roundtables) fully or significantly met expectations of 76% of the respondents. Usefulness of information on best practices in urban sustainability significantly or fully met the expectations of respondents by 76%. Canada's achievements in urban policies and strategies significantly or fully met expectations by 75%. 79% of respondents indicated that the forum provided at least one practical idea they would apply in their local context. The Forum also provided networking opportunities as indicated by 76% of respondents. On the question of relevant topics and themes were in the context of current global issues, 86% of respondents rated them as significantly or fully meeting their expectations.

There is, however a needs for improvement as some of the respondents (less than 5% in all eight questions) reported that the forum did not meet their expectations.

Some of the comments from respondents are as follows:

- *Where are the youth issue? The world needs to recognize that 50% of the world's population is under 25years of age.*
- *I did not find any concrete actions to be taken in urban infrastructure and development financing.*
- *More dynamic presentations with very concrete examples of work are needed.*
- *Few fresh ideas. No business representation!*
- *Why not invite and have more visionaries like Jeffrey Sachs, Stephen Lewis, David Suzuki?*
- *Speakers were too often politicians giving canned speeches.*
- *How did you select your participants and speakers? What are checks and balances?*
- *Too much networking events at the same time, so we missed a lot of interesting topics.*
- *There was overload of information dissemination. Participants should be urged to minimize handouts and use electronic information dissemination.*
- *Indigenous people were not given enough attention.*
- *There was very poor representation of and presence of professional associations and ideas on how they can be part and parcel of the urban global and local agenda.*
- *Range of topics excluded disability, particularly of aging population. Disability must be included in WU FI V.*
- *More specific case studies should be presented in networking sessions*
- *The linkage between presentations and exhibitions could be better organized.*
- *Many dialogues/network sessions had rooms that did not meet the needs of participants.*
- *The conference should be held over a period of two weeks to allow all participants to air their views.*

4.8 Usefulness of Forum sessions

The Questionnaire also attempted to determine the usefulness of the Forum sessions to Participants. Respondents were asked to rate how useful each type of five Forum sessions was. Table 7. Summarizes the responses in percentages.

Table 7: Degree of how the Forum was useful to survey respondents

| | Not useful | Somewhat useful | Useful | Very useful | Frequency |
|--|------------|-----------------|--------|-------------|-----------|
| Please rate how useful each type of Forum session was to you: | | | | | |
| (a) Opening of the Forum | 12.3% | 22.9% | 38.4% | 26.4% | 814 |
| (b) Networking events | 1.3% | 10.1% | 39.9% | 48.7% | 1028 |
| (c) Dialogues/special sessions | 1.8% | 14.6% | 43.1% | 40.5% | 979 |
| (d) Roundtables | 6.1% | 20.7% | 38.2% | 35.1% | 792 |
| (e) Exhibitions | 1.2% | 14.5% | 39.0% | 45.3% | 1056 |
| (f) Closing of the Forum | 9.9% | 16.2% | 38.9% | 34.9% | 464 |

The opening session was to provide Forum participants with inspiring and relevant messages regarding the Forum and the human settlement issues. Overall, respondents rated opening of the forum as very useful or useful by 65%. Networking events provided participants with opportunities to share experiences and discuss their work and learn from peers. Over 88% of respondents rated the Forum networking events as very useful or useful. Roundtables were rated as very useful or useful by 73% of respondents.

The exhibition hall provided opportunities for participants to get services and program me information from exhibitors. Majority of respondents (84%) found exhibitions to be very useful (45.3%) or useful (39%). More than 73% of respondents rated the closing of the forum very useful (34.9%) or Useful (38.9%).

However, 12.3% of respondents indicated that the opening session was not useful and 9.9% also rated the closing session as not necessary.

Some of the comments from respondents regarding usefulness of the forum sessions are:

- *Networking events did not allow the opportunity to network.*
- *I found it unfortunate that the youth roundtables was mainly youth and felt we were preaching to the converted.*
- *The conference was an eye opener, very educating, exciting and completely relevant.*
- *This kind of open session is what the world society needs! Thanks a lot!*
- *The 4 girls from Kenya who sang at the opening session were wonderful. Please think of abilities of speakers*
- *These forums are useful in creating global thinking to be applied locally.*
- *There should be more inclusive representation of indigenous people in opening and closing sessions.*
- *My biggest disappointment is the lack of depth in the various topics discussed. I left most feeling like I had only received a synopsis that could have just easily been read from a website.*
- *I attended Habitat conference of 1976. At WUF3, I missed the inspiring presentations of Barbara Wood, Mother Theresa, etc.,.*

4.9 Likelihood to apply ideas learned, maintain networks and participating in the next World Urban Forum IV

The Questionnaire also asked the likeliness to apply ideas, maintain networks and how likely participants of WUF III were to participate in WUFIV. The results are summarised in table 8 below.

Table 8: Responses on likelihood to apply ideas learned, maintain networks and participate in WUF IV

| | Unlikely | Somewhat Likely | Likely | Very Likely | Frequency |
|--|----------|-----------------|--------|-------------|-----------|
| How likely are you to: | | | | | |
| (a) Attempt to apply ideas learned at the conference in your local context | 2.3% | 14.3% | 35.9% | 47.5% | 1077 |
| (b) Maintain networks and contacts established at the conference | 3.9% | 14.4% | 33.5% | 48.2% | 1078 |
| (c) Participate in the next World Urban Forum to be held in China in 2008 | 27.6% | 22.4% | 20.2% | 29.8% | 1053 |

Overall, survey respondents gave the Forum a high utility rating with 82% indicating that they are very likely or likely to apply ideas learned at the Forum in their local context. On the question of likelihood of participating in the next World Urban Forum to be held in China in 2008, 50% of respondents indicated they were very likely or likely to participate in WUF IV.

Some of the comments from respondents are as follows:

- *I have learned something to help the Local Authorities in my country to achieve the MDGs.*
- *The conference has been very educational for me. In addition I made contacts and friends.*
- *If I was ten years younger I would try to participate in China in 2008.*
- *I enjoyed the conference as a young person who wants to take ideas from the forum and apply it to my community.*

5 Conclusion

The World Urban Forum III was evaluated by UN-HABITAT using the Survey Questionnaire. The survey aimed at assessing participation in and satisfaction of participants with the Forum. Overall, results from the survey are positive. Most respondents positively highlighted how inclusive, useful, educative, inspiring and catalysing the forum was. They also rated positively the usefulness of information presented, networking opportunities, training sessions, the exhibitions and logistics.

Some Indication of the Forum's success are highlighted as follows:

- Broad attendance in large numbers (125% increase over WUF II)
- Inclusive (balanced participation from public, private and civil society sectors compared to WUF II)
- Gender participation adequate (51.8% male, 48.2% female)
- Over 80% respondents satisfied with preparations before and during the conference
- Over 75% had their expectations met by the forum
- Over 71% respondents rated the forum useful
- 83% respondents would apply what they learnt at the forum to their local context
- Over 50% of additional comments thanked the organizers of the event, highlighting how the forum provided the needed motivation and inspiration to address challenges of urbanization.

However, there is a need for improvement and the following are recommendations to improve future forums. They are divided in four parts.

6 Recommendations

A. Planning: There is a need for early planning and involvement of all stakeholders working within realistic timeframes; regional preparatory meetings could be useful; ensure that women are given equal voices and that gender analysis is mainstreamed in all sessions; translation in all UN Languages is needed; sessions to be facilitated by skilled facilitators with experience of working with diverse groups; speeches at the opening and closing sessions to be few, shorter (*Three hours of the opening and closing sessions were considered too long*); few speakers and enough time for interaction would be appropriate; WUFs provided excellent opportunities for training and more training sessions should be organized at the next forum.

B. Format: Dialogue sessions should give time for interactions and solutions to be identified; training session gave excellent opportunity for learning, continues to ensure training at the next forum; Roundtables should be organised around themes and to ensure representation of different stakeholders; exhibitions should be kept open for longer hours; participating speakers and presenters should be well prepared to address

the topic; professional facilitators should be used for sessions that address contentious issues.

C. Logistics: Information on the Forum, its content and schedule of the event should be sent early; media should be adequate for all sessions (*not to concentrate only on the plenary and special sessions*); enough computer terminals should be in place to allow participants to access the internet; wireless access should also be accessible on site; transport arrangements were good and should be maintained in future forums

D. Appropriateness of the Venue

Survey results indicate that some participants had difficulties in attending their desired sessions because of space limitations. This can be attributed to popularity of certain sessions or space limitations due to high attendance than anticipated. For future forums, venues should be flexible in terms of space to accommodate unanticipated participants who by trend exceed estimated.

APPENDIX A

UN HABITAT PARTICIPANT SURVEY

Introduction

The purpose of evaluating the Third Session of the World Urban Forum (WUF3) is to assess the success, usefulness and relevance of the Forum. The assessment findings and lessons learned will assist in planning future World Urban Forums. We would be very grateful if you could take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire.

The information you provide is for research purposes only and will be administered in accordance with applicable privacy laws. Your specific responses will be anonymous and will not be attributed to you as an individual. Please refrain from including specific information that may allow for the identification of any individual(s).

Participant profile

1. Which country do you normally reside in? _____

2. Participant's Gender:

Male Female

3. Are you a member of an indigenous group?

Yes No

4. What is your partner type/organizational affiliation? (Please check only one)

National government (including Embassy, Civil Servant, Parliament)

Local government (including City, Local Authority, Local Government Association)

Private sector

Non-governmental organization (NGO) (including Community-based organization, Faith-based organization, foundation)

Academia/Research Institute (including Educational Institute, Polytechnic, College, University)

United Nations/International Organisation
Individual participant

Other: (please specify)

5. How did you hear about WUF3? (Please check only one)

I received a formal invitation

Through the Habitat-Jam

From a network to which I belong

I am an organizer of WUF3

The Internet

From the previous WUF in Barcelona

Media coverage (television, print, etc.)

Other: (please specify)

6. How satisfied were you with the Forum in terms of:

Very
Dissatisfied

Dissatisfied

Satisfied

Very
Satisfied

N/A

Before the conference:

a) Timeliness of information on the conference *objectives*

b) Useful information on the conference *programme*

c) Information available on the conference *logistics*

d) Organization and content of WUF3 website

e) Ease of registration

| | Very Dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Satisfied | Very Satisfied | Not Applicable |
|---|-------------------|--------------|-----------|----------------|----------------|
| During the conference: | | | | | |
| f) The ease of obtaining photo id and badge | | | | | |
| g) Quality of facilities (i.e. room, lighting, sound) | | | | | |
| h) Communication facilities (including Internet access) | | | | | |
| i) Support and assistance available | | | | | |
| j) Transportation logistics | | | | | |

7. Did the Forum meet your expectations in terms of:

| | Not Met | Somewhat Met | Significantly Met | Fully Met | Not Applicable |
|--|---------|--------------|-------------------|-----------|----------------|
| a) Relevance of topics and themes. | | | | | |
| b) Quality of speakers and presentations. | | | | | |
| c) Organization of networking events/dialogues and roundtables | | | | | |
| d) Usefulness of information on best practices in urban sustainability. | | | | | |
| e) Showcasing Canada's achievements in urban policies and strategies. | | | | | |
| f) Providing at least one practical idea that you may apply in your local context. | | | | | |
| g) Opportunities for participant discussion | | | | | |

8. Please rate the Forum sessions in order of the usefulness to you:

| | Not Useful | Somewhat Useful | Useful | Very Useful | Not Applicable |
|---------------------------------|------------|-----------------|--------|-------------|----------------|
| a) Opening/Closing of the forum | | | | | |
| b) Networking events | | | | | |
| c) Dialogues/special sessions | | | | | |
| d) Roundtables | | | | | |
| e) Exhibitions | | | | | |
| f) Special events/side events | | | | | |

9. How likely are you to:

| | Unlikely | Somewhat Likely | Likely | Very Likely | Not Applicable |
|---|----------|-----------------|--------|-------------|----------------|
| a) Attempt to apply ideas learned at the conference in your local context | | | | | |
| b) Maintain networks and contacts established at the conference | | | | | |
| c) Participate in the next World Urban Forum | | | | | |

10. Additional comments:

Thank you for your participation!