



Pollution and unemployment top city residents' concerns

Nairobi, 29 September 2009 — Unemployment, lack of affordable housing as well as road and traffic congestion are some of the key concerns for urban dwellers, a new online survey by UN-HABITAT has revealed.

Poverty, crime and corruption also form part of worries for the urban populations, the survey further reveals. The month long Plan Your City survey was designed solicit views on the theme of this year's World Habitat Day – *Planning our urban future*.

The survey that drew the interest of about 200 people from over 60 countries across the globe had the respondents being asked their views about the problems facing their cities and was classified under: access to services; access to land and housing; economic problems, environmental problems and social problems – some of the major topics covered by UN-HABITAT's new flagship Global Report on Human Settlements: Planning Sustainable Cities to be launched on World Habitat Day. Respondents were also asked to list the positive and negative factors affecting the future of cities.

Under access to services, roads and traffic congestion were listed as the biggest problems at 30 percent, followed by public transport at 21 percent and education at 13 percent. Others were sanitation, water, health and electricity.

“In terms of transportation, I'm using public transport and non motorized-transport instead of the private car. But the most important thing is to invite others to do the same. I believe that with family members, friends and co-workers it is possible to promote these means of transport, and show why it is personal and socially better to use them. In any case, the political will and development of public programs by the authorities are very important to change the people's behaviour in terms of transportation,” a respondent stated.

Issues mentioned under access to land and housing included lack of affordable housing,

lack of decent housing, lack of credit or loans for housing and lack of land.

Unemployment, scarce skills development opportunities, hostile environment for informal sector enterprises and complex business registration were some of the economic problems cited by the respondents.

Environmental problems had a whopping 85 percent of the respondents blaming pollution and 15 percent citing natural disasters as some of the problems in their cities.

Poverty, crime, social unrest, corruption and segregation were the social problems listed, in that order.

Some of the negative factors affecting cities were listed as economic instability and lack of jobs; climate change; population growth and scarce resources. On the other hand, some of the positive factors affecting cities were cited as new forms of community and collective support as well as new forms of transport.

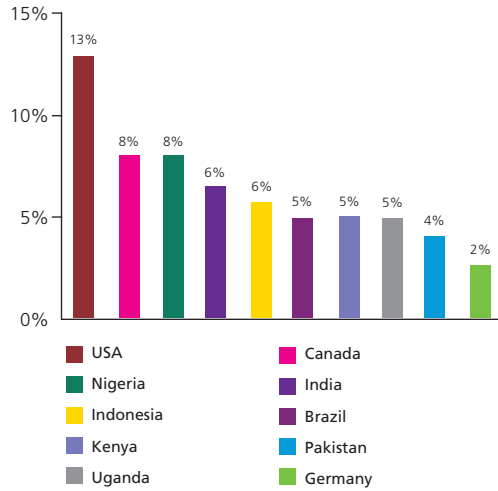
As for the ages of the respondents, 25-34 age category had the biggest number of respondents at 44 percent, followed by those in the 35-44 age bracket at 21 percent while the 45-54 group came in third at 14 percent.

To prove that issues of urbanisation were important even to the young, those in the 15-24 age bracket came in fourth at 10 percent. The rest were the 55-64 age group at 8 percent and 65+ and below 15.

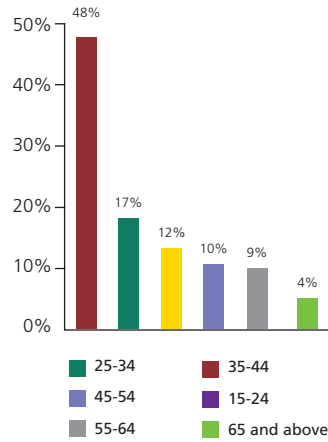
At 13.6 percent, United States of America had the largest number of respondents followed by Nigeria and Kenya at 8.6 percent and 6.8 percent respectively. The other leading countries were Brazil, India, Pakistan and Indonesia.

Who responded?

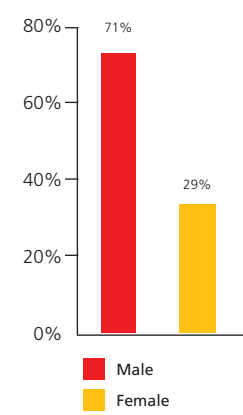
Countries with most respondents



Age

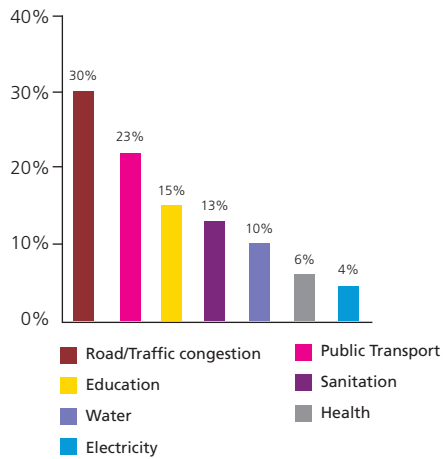


Gender

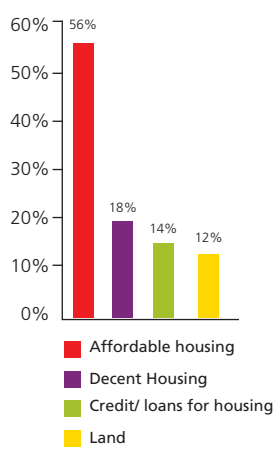


Your views on problems in cities

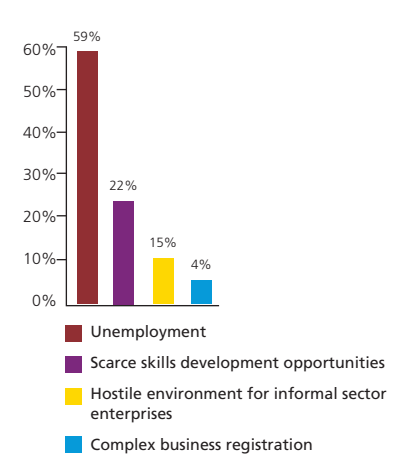
Access to services



Access to land and housing

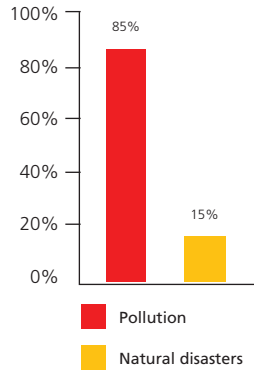


Economic Problems

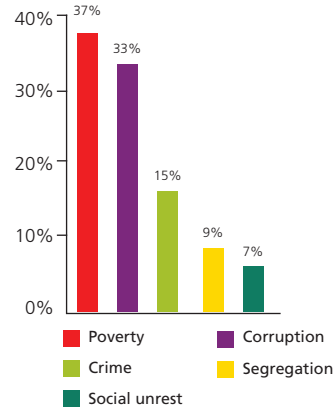


Your views on problems in cities

Environmental Problems

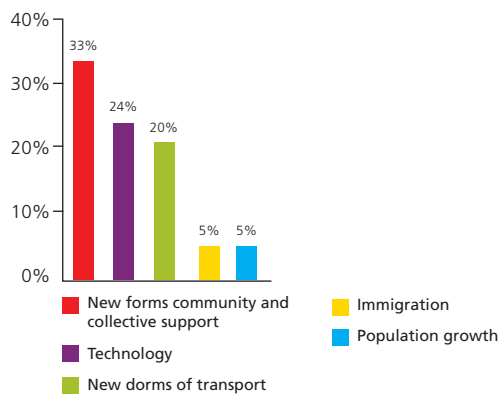


Social Problems



Factors affecting the future of cities

Positive factors



Negative factors

