

Evaluation of impact and outcomes of the ninth session of the World Urban Forum - WUF9



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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFINUA	Action Framework for the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda
CD	Capacity Development
CPR	Committee of Permanent Representatives
EA	Expected Accomplishment
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
GA	General Assembly
GC	Governing Council
HAP	Habitat Agenda Partners
HCPD	Habitat Country Programme Document
ICOs	Intermediate Capacity Outcomes
IFI	International Financial Institution
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex
MoUs	Memorandum of Understanding
NUA	New Urban Agenda
NUF	National Urban Forum
NUP	National Urban Policy
PSC Amount	Programme Support Cost
RBM	Results-Based Management
RUF	Regional Urban Forum
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
The Forum	9th Session of the World Urban Forum
TOC	Theory of Change
UN	United Nations
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UM	URBANICE Malaysia (WUF9 Local Organizing Committee)
WUF	World Urban Forum
WUF9	Ninth Session of the World Urban Forum

Executive summary

WUF9 context

The Ninth Session of the World Urban Forum (WUF9) took place from 7 to 13 February 2018 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The Forum is held every two years and gathers a wide range of experts in the field of sustainable urban development and human settlements. It is held in a different host city and country biennially. UN-Habitat serves as the convener and secretariat¹ of the Forum at UN-Habitat headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. Its innovative and inclusive nature, combined with high-level participation therein, makes it a unique event and the world's premier international gathering on urban issues.

Mandate, purpose and objective of the evaluation

The Governing Council of UN-Habitat requested the Executive Director, through Resolution 26/6 and in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), to assess the impact and outcome of each session of the Forum using a results-based approach, including various evaluation tools and mechanisms. The evaluation period ended one year after the celebration of WUF9, allowing for a reasonable time to measure impact outlooks and outcomes. The evaluation started in June 2018 and was finalized in March 2019. The evaluation includes the assessment of the achievement of WUF9 expected accomplishments (EA) and performance in the context of the WUF Programme. The evaluation aims at promoting learning and knowledge sharing and is expected to be instrumental in providing recommendations for the effective implementation of the remaining period of the programme 2018-2023. The programme was approved in 2017 for a period of six years, 2018-2023.

The key users of the evaluation are UN-Habitat management and staff, the governing bodies,

donors, partners, experts in urban development, policymakers, and other key stakeholders.

The evaluation was carried out as a corporate assessment, conducted by the external consultant, Ilde Lambrechts. UN-Habitat's Evaluation Unit managed and provided support to the appraisal process. The WUF Secretariat was responsible for providing information and documentation as required as well as for the coordination with relevant WUF stakeholders for the provision of information. The evaluation process was guided by an Evaluation Reference Group.

Approach and methodology of evaluation

The evaluation determined performance of the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the organizations' activities in relation to their objectives as systematically and objectively as possible. It aimed to assess outcomes and longer-term impacts using a results-based approach by tracking the results chain and applying tailored indicators. To achieve this, the evaluation shifted the focus from "growth" to "transformational change". Outcomes that are most likely to be sustained beyond the delivery of WUF are those that reflect changes in the working of institutions and local urban service delivery towards reaching sustainable development.

The evaluation applied the "*theory of change approach*" with the WUF Programme logframe as its main tool. The evaluation used a framework to measure change - capacity development in the Forum at two levels, namely: (i) measuring the intermediate capacity outcomes at the level of WUF participants; and (ii) measuring change at the level of the institutional capacity areas. These are aligned to the WUF9 expected accomplishments. The evaluation complemented the theory of change approach with the "systems approach" to help identify issues and explain links that the theory of change does not accomplish as well.

1 United Nations Human Settlements Programme (2002), Report of the First Session of the World Urban Forum, Nairobi. Art 13 and; GC Resolution 26/6

The evaluation of WUF9 further assessed the mainstreaming of the cross-cutting issues of gender, youth, climate change, and human rights. The evaluation was guided by 10 questions allowing for focus on key points, thus targeting data collection for in-depth analysis.

The evaluation used analytic as well as holistic or synthetic data collection techniques. They included: (i) a literature review; (ii) semi-structured interviews via Skype and in person in Belgium, Kenya and Malaysia; and (iii) surveys. The surveys included the On-Site Participant Survey, the WUF9 Participant Impact Survey, and the UN-Habitat Staff Survey.

Limitations to the evaluation included: (i) an extensive scope; (ii) a complex scope of events; and (iii) a far-reaching impact of many external factors that were difficult to attribute to WUF.

Overview of WUF9

WUF9 was the first large-scale event on urban development after the adoption of the New Urban Agenda during the Habitat III Conference in October 2016. The Ninth Urban Forum was also the first to focus on its implementation. The Forum was hosted by the Government of Malaysia and took place in the nation's capital, Kuala Lumpur. The theme of WUF9 was Cities 2030, Cities for All: Implementing the New Urban Agenda.

The target populations who benefit directly from the Forum are the New Urban Agenda Partners and decision makers, national and subnational

in Malaysia. The Government contributed an additional USD 5 million in kind to this effort.

WUF9 aimed at (i) advancing the coordinated implementation of the New Urban Agenda; (ii) raising UN-Habitat's profile as a leading agency in the field of urbanization; and (iii) consolidating UN-Habitat's knowledge base with the conference outcomes incorporated in the agency's strategies and work from the normative to the operation level.² The expected accomplishments or short-term results as indicated in the WUF9 logframe are the following:

EA1. Awareness is raised on sustainable urban development among stakeholders and constituencies, including the public at large.

EA2. Collective knowledge on sustainable urban development is improved through inclusive open debates; sharing of lessons learned; and the exchange of urban solutions, good practices, and policies.

EA3. Coordination and cooperation are increased within the United Nations system and with different stakeholders and constituencies for an effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the urban dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals.

EA4. Substantive and strategic inputs from multilateral organizations, national and subnational governments and stakeholders are provided into the reporting of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda (in line with Op. 167 of the New Urban Agenda).

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