

Event Management Guidelines

External Relations, Strategy, Knowledge and Innovation Division
Communications and Media Section
Events and Outreach Unit



Introduction to the Event Management Guidelines



1.1 Background

An event is not just an event, it is the beginning of a relationship with stakeholders. Events are part of the agency's outreach to raise the profile of the work and impact of UN-Habitat, create awareness of sustainable urbanization and the Sustainable Development and promote partnerships.

The manner in which events are hosted or co-hosted by UN-Habitat influences the overall reputation of the agency particularly with partners and within the UN system. Key events include the World Urban Forum, World Habitat Day and World Cities Day and the UN-Habitat Assembly.

The Events and Outreach Unit provides professional logistical and operational support including planning, preparation, creation of a conference programme, event management, logistics, operations, online and onsite registrations for well-organized events. Contact unhabitat-events@un.org.

1.2 Purpose of the guidelines

These guidelines support key partners and the whole of the UN-Habitat to plan strategic and impactful events in line with the United Nations policies and procedures and UN-Habitat branding guidelines.

They aim to ensure all events are consistent with the UN-Habitat's vision, mission and strategic plan and to minimize UN-Habitat's exposure to all levels of risks, in particular, public profile, legal, commercial and personal safety.

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Planning the Event

2.1 The Brief

Preparing a detailed brief of the proposed event is the first and most important element in organizing any event. The brief should set out: aims and objectives of the event, available funding, likely size and target audience, key elements of a marketing and promotions strategy, issues for special consideration e.g. locations and venue, security, etc. It should also outline the purpose of the event, confirm the focal point(s) for the planning process and coordination of the event on the day and outline expected attendance numbers.

The event enquiry form is found in Annex 1 which should be submitted to the Events and Outreach Unit ideally online.

[submit your event request](#)

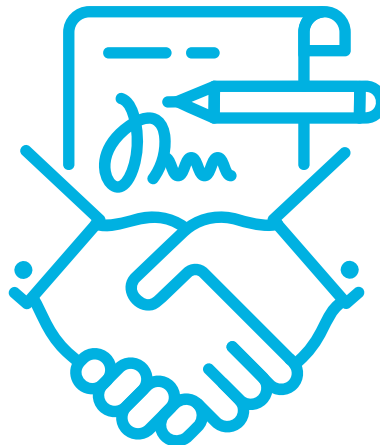
2.2 UN-Habitat Protocol

Where the Executive Director or other high-level United Nations representatives, Ministers or senior government officials are involved, certain requirements and standards are required regarding protocol, ensuring proper meet and greet (airport/hotel/venue) and assistance during the meeting/event. If the above mentioned representatives apart from the Executive Director are in attendance, the UN-Habitat Secretariat of the Governing Bodies should be informed via unhabitat-sgb@un.org.

2.3 Legal Agreement

UN-Habitat requires a legal basis in hosting or co-hosting an event. The legal agreement can be a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), Host Country Agreement (HCA), Agreement of Cooperation, Contribution Agreement or a different legal framework. The legal document outlines responsibilities of both parties for the event, privileges and immunities (in relation with travel) and any legal framework for cash contribution from the hosting partner.

The Events and Outreach Unit will liaise with the conference service provider or event partner and the UN-Habitat Legal Office based on the signed agreement in relations to the identified technical and other requirements. The Unit will also advise on budget breakdown requirements. The UN-Habitat Legal Office can be contacted for further advice via unhabitat-legaloffice@un.org



2.4 Branding

When planning an event, the following should be considered:

Setting up the stage; backdrop; correct branding; UN and other coat of arms (as set out in the legal agreement) UN flag (if a USG or ASG is present); country flag if a Minister or higher is present; City flag of the host city if the Mayor is present and EU flag if the country is a Member of the European Union. The Events and Outreach Unit can provide guidance on the above.

[UN-Habitat logos](#)

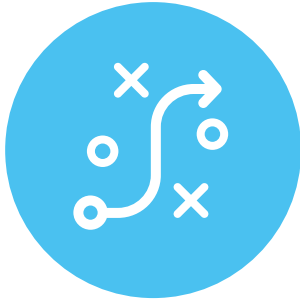
[UN-Habitat Brand Manual](#)

2.5 Webpage/Social Media

The Communications and Media Section can advise on options on website and social media platform. Specific tailor-made material can be prepared/designed by the Section with the organizers providing key messages etc. common hashtag(s) agreed upon and mailing through the UN-Habitat database and use of partner platforms arranged. The setting up of new, specific websites and social media is discouraged.

[UN Secretariat guidelines](#)

[UN-Habitat Social Media guidelines](#)



2.6 Risk Management

Risk management is the identification, assessment, and creation of plans to mitigate risks. These can include planning of logistics and operations, including travel/accommodation arrangements, human resources, underestimate of the budget or the threat of an attack or natural disaster.



2.7 Security and Health

Contact either United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) in Nairobi directly to assess and recommend security needs in the city/country the event is planned for, or the Events and Outreach Unit who will liaise with UNDSS on security requirements to establish a focal point for the event. It is advisable to inform each Participant in the information note to ensure to have their own health insurance.

[UNDSS](#)

[Joint Medical Services](#)



2.8 Post Conference Assessment

A survey of participants during or after the event can give insights to the success and challenges. An “after action review” of the event focusing on planning, preparation and operations/ logistics with learning from success and challenges is recommended.

This can look at what worked well and what did not, what actions can we take for future improvement and who would be responsible.

Larger scale meetings, events or conferences which take place regularly benefit from an evaluation (see section 5.2).

Statistic on attendance can be compiled using the information requested within the registration form and data from the event itself such as gender, age, partner type, country and region of participants.



Logistics and operations management

3.1 Scheduling the Event

When setting dates, times and the format of an event – the following should be considered:

What day of the week, time of day or time of year will ensure maximum attention and participation and avoid clashing with other UN or partner high profile meetings or taking place on United Nations or host country holidays or national days. Check availability of speaker/s and venue/s and check budgetary implications (e.g. staff overtime, venue hire, catering). Also check in terms of Communication – is there a special UN Day, or anniversary that would make a good 'news peg'.

3.2 Venue Selection and layout

Choosing a venue is one of the most critical early planning stages of any event and should take place early as possible, as it is the most difficult element to change once the event execution begins. If several rooms are required, consider a layout design. The below should also be taken into consideration:

- Audio or audio visual and technical needs
- Will the venue comfortably fit the anticipated guest numbers?
- If VIPs are attending the venue may need security access
- UN-Habitat Executive Director, USGs and higher officials may need a room/office for bilateral meetings

- If media is a factor, is the venue suitable in presentation with adequate lighting and back drops for interview areas and is there a suitable venue for a press conference?
- If rooms are required for pre or post-event functions, is the venue practical?
- If catering is required, is the venue suitable for preparation and service?
- Car parking
- Access for persons with disabilities and sign language provision
- Adequate number of toilet facilities
- Venue cleaning services

For events in the UNON Complex in Nairobi please check

UNON-DCS

3.3 Venue Design

The presentation or 'look' of the venue is a very important component of any event as the decor and ambience set the mood for any event. See advice on Branding (2.4) and consider the following:

- Backdrop and banners
- Signage for directions
- Digital screens
- Naming or numbering of meeting rooms and other areas
- Flowers and plants
- Seating arrangements
- Name Tags/Place Cards
- Glass (not plastic) bottles of water and glasses for the Speaker(s), Moderator(s)

3.4 Food and Beverage

After securing the venue, look at the catering needs. A variety of international dishes is advisable, including vegetarian, with consideration of regional restrictions on certain dishes. Dietary restrictions of high-level participants can be considered.

3.5 Speakers/Moderators

Confirm the following details in writing with speakers and moderators: event date/s, times and venue; language and duration of presentation; special requirements (e.g. audio/visual) and payments if applicable.

Provide details of anticipated audience, other participants including VIPs, relevant material and a running order and do a test-run with the moderator(s).

3.6 Interpretation

Consider language needs for your event, language of the main partner or host country as well as invited Guest and Speakers/Moderators. Consider having the event as inclusive as possible, also with sign language and real time captioning for Persons with hearing disabilities.

3.7 Travel

Identify as early as possible if any speakers, moderators or guests will be sponsored to travel to the event. Consider visa and health insurance requirements which are the responsibility of sponsored and self-sponsored guests, as well as specific country regulations for entry/exit. Three weeks is required for registration in UMOJA for issuance of an air ticket as well as DSA payment. It is also advisable to provide information on available accommodation. In case the sponsored person is high-level refer to point 2.2. on additional information.

3.8 Invitations

Invitations should be sent out as early as possible to allow participants to respond and plan their travel. E-mail is the quickest way of sending and managing invitations which should look professional with eye-catching graphics, a relevant subject line, and content. Consider sending a 'save the date' card and to personalize the invitation letter with the inclusion of RSVP for planning purposes. Provide as much information as possible including concept note, flyers, draft programme (can be regularly updated) and a registration link.

It is important to track responses to invitations, to acknowledge emails and confirm registration with provision of connection links if virtual event or an

information pack if a physical meeting. This is critical to manage other logistics including venue capacity, catering needs and transportation. It also helps to create a follow-up plan for reminders, changes in event logistics or to get more details from confirmed attendees.

The Event and Outreach Unit is building an UN-Habitat Event Management System to send out individualized E-mails through the event management tool in a single click. This will be able to send emails and detect bounce back emails while cleaning the database automatically. See point 6 for more information.

[United Nations Correspondence Manual](#)

[UN-Habitat short style guide](#)

3.9 Registration management

Registration is often the first experience attendees have with your conference. Registration activities are both online and onsite. The process begins with the required online registration in advance which involves creating a registration form with a stated deadline on a branded webpage in liaison with the Production Unit. Onsite registration is the process of supporting pre-registered online registered participants which are pre-approved through internal processes to attend the event and involves managing real time accreditation and badging of participants. This process requires

good software and hardware, blank badges and lanyards and personnel. The Events and Outreach Unit can assist in identification of requirements, setting, costing and supervision of onsite registration.

3.10 Conference materials

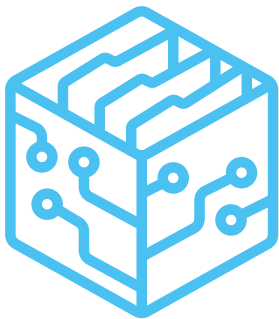
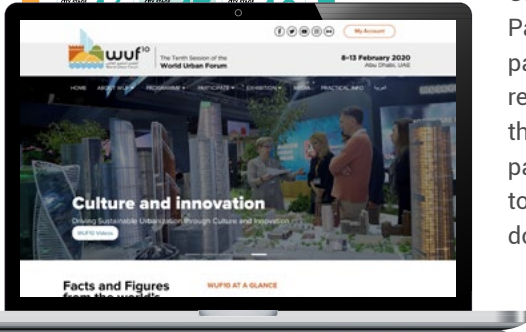
The design and dissemination of print and digital event material such as programmes, invitations and promotional materials are very important. Limit paper printing but consider it for a map of the venue, summary programme and emergency information. In some cases, a conference bag, pen and notepad can increase visibility. Engage the Communications and Media Section to manage/support the production process for you.

3.11 Exhibition

An exhibition is an effective way to showcase UN-Habitat's work, impact and key messages at events. Exhibitions can deliver content through installations, print and digital displays and can be supported by the Communications and Media Section, Production Unit.

For any enquiries please contact the [Production Unit](#)

Event communication and promotion



4.1 Promotional material

Promotional tools can include event webpages, E- posters, social media, personal invitations, tool kits, trello boards etc. depending on budget and target audiences. Promotional branded products raise awareness. UN-Habitat has corporate branded items for sale which can be used during events or specific items could be designed and procured at a cost.

4.2 United Nations PaperSmart Initiative

UN-Habitat has adopted the PaperSmart initiative which was passed in the General Assembly's resolution A/RES/55/285 to promote the use of electronic media and provide participants with electronic access to meeting programmes, agendas, documents and statements.

4.3 Webcast

The United Nations can webcast your event live on UN Web TV. However, certain technical aspects must be taken into consideration as well as the cost implication.

UN Web TV

4.4 Media

Effective media liaison requires careful planning and management and can include direct statements and press releases, interviews and editorial opinions (op-eds). During events live social media can be used. The media attending an event can be identified during registration. Contact the Head of Communications and Media Section for guidance and approval of press releases.

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Internal coverage

5.1 Photographs/Video

It is useful to agree on whether an official photographer is needed, who will pay and who hold the copyright. The photographs require captions and should be made available the same day. While mobile phone photographs are good for social media, high quality ones are needed for the webpage and publications. A short video of 1 – 2 minutes can be useful for social media.

[Guidelines on submitting photographs](#)

5.2 Evaluation

Evaluation is an important part of the event management process providing insights and analysis to make future events more productive and more effective.

The Evaluation Unit can advise and be reached via unhabitat-evaluation@un.org

See UN-Habitat Evaluation Policy for more information

[UN-Habitat Evaluation Policy](#)

5.3 Thank you letters

After the event, formal written thank you letters should be issued to the Speaker(s), Moderator(s) and any sponsors to show your appreciation. The letter should be signed with an electronic signature and disseminated in pdf format, with a forwarding text via E-mail and relevant colleagues copied. All letters of thanks should be sent out as soon as possible following the event, usually in the week after the event.

Also offer informal thanks to others who have assisted and people who worked extensively on the event (an E-mail is always appreciated).



UN-Habitat Event Management System (EMS) and Stakeholder Database Management System (SDMS)

6.1 The System

The Events and Outreach Unit is creating a tailor-made tool namely the Event Management System (EMS), a software tool, which includes the Stakeholder Database Management System (SDMS). The System is data-driven to support the better management of partner data through a modernized system for event management, registration, accreditation, individualized e-letters, event applications, real time login of event organizers to amend details and on demand real time analysis and other features. It will be available to use in the second half of 2021.

6.2 Event Management System (EMS)

The Event Management System was successfully used at the World Urban Forum in 2020 where participants and event organizers could login into their registration or event application profile and amend it until a cut-off date. This supported self-management of data, instead emails being sent to UN-Habitat with manual correction of data. The Event Management System can be used for event applications and online registration, ultimately also for onsite registration.

The tailor-made software is a Business Intelligence technology. It simplifies on-line registration and accreditation processes; on-site registration; event applications and its management in allocation of timing/date/room (in development); enhances practices for the corporate stakeholder and event data collection and management, integration, analysis and; transmission of events data for a programme to be designed; stakeholder information collection; real time statistics, and on-demand software requirements can be implemented within the limitation of the tool.

The system allows the user to register for an event easily if a profile already exists due to the attendance at a previous event. The profile is saved and can be updated quickly.

6.3 Stakeholder Database Management System (SDMS)

The Stakeholder Database Management System will build a comprehensive corporate database of all stakeholders who attend a hosted UN-Habitat event to allow UN-Habitat to mobilize effectively for events.



6.4 Benefits on time and cost saving

The tool supports faster management of organization and logistics of any event where an online registration of event application is required. It simplifies the communication to individuals of selected groups within the database via E-newsletters, surveys, invitation letters, reminders, etc. with one click.

There will be no need to build for each event a new registration form as it can be adjusted each time.

Once all UN-Habitat events are handled within the Stakeholder Database Management and Event System, staff will be able to access certain aspects of the information of the stakeholders, identify invitees and ensure a positive experience for all parties involved.



5

ANNEX 1

Event enquiry form

[Submit online the event form here](#)

1. Details

Name

Email address

Telephone (with country code)

Mobile (with country code)

Country and City of the event

Name of the venue / conference centre

Event name

Partner Organization (if any)

Number of attendees

Start date

End date

LOCATION

UNON Off-site Virtual

TYPE OF EVENT

Conference only Conference with (specify) Exhibition only Other

2. Space requirements

Number of rooms required

Conference room(s) layout

Theatre Classroom Fishbowl U-shaped Hollow square Boardroom Other

3. Exhibition space

Type of exhibition

- Display booths Market stalls Science installations Art installations
 Photo exhibition Other, please specify

4. Support services

Food & beverage

- Coffee, tea, snacks Bottled water Catered meals Reception

5. Equipment & systems

Audiovisual equipment

- LCD projector/Beamer Laptop to be used with LCD projector Overhead projector
 Slide projector Projector screen TV DVD Player

Specific requirements

- Audio recording Video recording Lighting Internet Live streaming Other

Stationery & supplies

- Whiteboard Flip charts Markers Notepads Pens Pencils Badge holders Lanyards

6. Interpretation

Simultaneous interpretation

- Arabic Chinese English French Russian Spanish

7. Others

Other requirements

- Backdrops Banners Signposting Document folders Others

8. Additional information

Please submit to the Event and Outreach Unit via unhabitat-events@un.org

A better quality of life for all
in an urbanizing world



UN  **HABITAT**
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME
P.O. Box 30030, Nairobi 00100, Kenya

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