



**REPORTING FORMAT FOR PARTNERS**

**Networking – Side – Training events**

**City Changer Room – Urban Library – Agora – One UN events**

**Deadline: 30 April 2014**

**Please send via email:** [wuf@unhabitat.org](mailto:wuf@unhabitat.org)

<b>Name of Reporter:</b>	
Event title/number:	Healthy Cities for Healthy Life – Halifax, Canada as a Healthy Sustainable Model City
Date:	April 7, 2014
Venue:	White Pavilion, UN Habitat Booth, Room B
Time:	11:00
Name of Organizing Institution(s):	Canadian Environmental Network
Country/City where Organizing Institution(s) is/are based:	Canada
Approximate number of participants:	80

**Summary of the Event (max: 300 words):**

- *Brief background of the event, including overall objectives and purposes*

This presentation showcased the Halifax Story – how Halifax, Canada became a global leader in achieving a healthy environment and healthy citizens. Halifax has distinguished itself in 4 areas of action: Non-Smoking legislation; Public Scent-Free policies in schools, hospitals, universities and other public buildings; Pesticide-Free Bylaw and Environmentally Healthy Schools. The session focused on how environmental groups, industry, and the medical community worked in partnership in a multi-stakeholder decision-making process to bring this about. It featured a power point presentation, detailed indoor air quality chart, and an extensive hands-on resource list to guide participants in making their own city an environmentally healthy one. Discussions included the rationale for the changes, actions taken and how the community has benefited from these changes. These actions ensure environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive communities. They contribute to more resilient communities by reducing toxic releases to air, water and soil and are also a benefit in disaster preparedness planning. The session was attended by over 80 people from 25 countries with the highest number coming from the developing world.

- *Relevant Focus Areas (Refer to below: UN-Habitat’s thematic areas) and cross-cutting issues*

The session was obviously strong on Urban Land, Legislation and Governance, for obvious reasons. The Halifax initiatives are indeed cross-cutting, also figuring into Urban Economy by promoting sustainable development and greening of the economy. The huge reduction in pesticide use strengthens the carrying capacity and resiliency of urban ecosystems while stimulating less toxic (greener) approaches to the care of lawns, parks and public spaces. Housing and Slum Upgrading is also addressed with the potential to green the building industry and its materials providers. Health costs are also lowered by providing healthier housing and work, recreation and places of worship for citizens.

**(Networking Events, Side Events, Training Events, City Changer Room, One UN Room, Urban Library, and Agora Room)**

All reports received will be included in the WUF7 final report to be published after the closing of the Forum. We kindly urge you to send the report of your session to us **before 30 April 2014** following this format. Please be aware that not delivering the report within the deadline will be taken into consideration when applying for future events at the World Urban Forum.





## Summary of the Discussion (max: total 500 words):

### 1. Outline of the discussion/debates

The discussion began with an explanation of the Total Load Concept – the totality of exposures as they affect both the earth and people – both of which exceed their carrying capacity when they can no longer process or defend themselves from various toxic substances.

- Non-Smoking Legislation allows full access to public buildings, schools, and places of entertainment, while improving overall health and reducing healthcare costs.
- The Pesticide Bylaw opens access to public areas, schools, playgrounds, hospitals and neighborhoods where noxious chemicals are no longer used, thereby relieving problems of asthma, chemical sensitivities, and other related health issues. People can exercise freely in healthier more resilient public spaces, knowing that they will not encounter toxic pesticides. At the same time, urban ecosystems are relieved of chemical releases to air, water and soil thus establishing healthier, more resilient ecosystems.
- No Scent Policies reduce the total load, thereby strengthening overall immunity and resistance to disease. Education on this subject helps to give people more control over their home and work environment. Since less toxic products typically have fewer and milder ingredients, this reduces the burden to the wastewater stream.
- The two New Schools built in Halifax to the highest environment and health standards (even beyond LEED standards) have dramatically improved the learning environment for students and staff. In these schools asthmatic children rarely need to use their “puffers”. The healthier building materials provide a perfect cradle-to-grave solution for buildings. These principles for environmentally healthy building methods can be applied to homes and all public buildings.

In discussion, attendees raised the issue of how to demonstrate the relationship between ill health and chemical exposure. They also wondered how the minds of “old school” medical professionals can be changed to acknowledge that there are proven links between chemical exposures and ill health.

In this session we also explored how Halifax achieved its expertise by using a Multi-Stakeholder Decision-Making Process (MSDMP). While the initiatives were citizen-lead, eventually business interests, governments, the medical community, and the media were all engaged in bringing about these progressive and far-reaching changes.

### 2. Major emerging issues and position documents/declarations towards:

- *Habitat III*

At Habitat III, the MDGs will be replaced by the SDGs. The 4 Halifax initiatives inform the SDGs through environmental sustainability, the green economy and reduced health care costs. Health is the real driver for environmental change and must figure prominently in the development of the SDGs.

- *POST2015*

The open community dialogue in Halifax and shared decision making contributes to stronger, more resilient ecosystems and a better informed, connected, equitable and resilient society. These factors should come forward to enrich the POST2015 agenda as well as the New Urban Agenda in general.

- *A New Urban Agenda*



**3. Recommendations made during the discussion**

*(e.g. policy direction, good/best practices, resource mobilization, innovative funding mechanism, etc.)*

The session offered a wholesome discussion on theory, policy development and best practices. Robust resource lists were developed and circulated electronically to all attendees.

**4. Building partnerships, network and synergies with UN-Habitat**

*(e.g. agreements or Memorandum of Understanding committed/signed, amounts and number of pledged contributions and partnerships/networks, etc.)*

The Health Caucus of RCEN has been engaged with UN Habitat since 2006. We have kept step with and contributed to the dialogue involving world urban issues. We plan to continue to build these partnerships and to network with attendees through our strong email list, developed through our session sign-up sheet.

**Detail Information of Speakers/Presenters/Moderators:**

Full name (Mr/Ms):	Ms. Sheila Cole
Nationality:	Canadian
Organization/Institution:	Health Caucus, Canadian Environmental Network
Time:	Full presentation
Position:	Chair, WUF Committee
Contact address (Email):	A new email address is forthcoming

If there were more speakers/presenters/moderators in your events, please feel free to add the above tables.

**UN-Habitat Thematic areas**

All events are identified by UN-Habitat priority substantive areas as below.

**URBAN LAND, LEGISLATION & GOVERNANCE**

*Land & GLTN, Urban Legislation, Urban and Community Management & Governance, Safety*

**URBAN PLANNING & DESIGN**

*Regional & Metropolitan Planning, City Extensions & Enlargements, Market Town & Intermediate City Planning*

**URBAN ECONOMY**

*Urban & Municipal Finance, Urban Productivity, Youth and Job Creation*

**URBAN BASIC SERVICES**

*Water & Sanitation, Urban Energy, Urban Mobility, Urban Waste Management*

**HOUSING & SLUM UPGRADING**

*Housing, Slum Upgrading, Shelter Rehabilitation*

**RISK REDUCTION & REHABILITATION**

*Urban Risk Reduction, Infrastructure Rehabilitation, Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation, Resilience*



**RESEARCH & CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT**  
*Global Urban Observatory, Flagship Reports, Capacity Development*



*Cross-cutting issues:*

**GENDER**  
**YOUTH**  
**HUMAN RIGHTS**

