



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

Reporting Format for Partners
(Networking Events, Side Events, Training Events, City Changer Room, One UN Room, Urban Library, and Agora Room)

Name of Reporter:	Margaret Scott
Event title/number:	Inclusive Citizen Engagement in the Planning of a Bus Rapid Transit Extension in Chelsea, MA (United States)
Date:	Friday, April 11 th
Venue:	City Changer Room
Time:	8:30 am – 9:30 am
Name of Organizing Institution(s):	Harvard University Graduate School of Design
Country/City where Organizing Institution(s) is/are based:	Cambridge, MA (United States)
Approximate number of participants:	20

Summary of the Event (max: 300 words):

The event featured student work from the Master in Urban Planning program at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design. The project presented focuses on inclusive citizen engagement in the ongoing planning of a bus rapid transit extension in the city of Chelsea, directly north of Boston, MA. Inclusion and citizen engagement are prioritized in an effort to integrate the low income, new immigrant population into the redevelopment of the "Gateway City" of Chelsea. The project focuses on planning for residential uses in an industrial landscape and the expansion of multi-modal transit to a previously inaccessible neighbourhood.

The student work engages with actors on multiple scales: local residents, city and state officials, private developers and business owners. Students contribute to the formal city planning process while grappling with issues of income equality and inclusion as they work directly with citizens. The presentation outlined the value of student involvement in city change-making, both in the on-the-ground planning process and as important preparation for leadership in the planning field. The presentation engaged directly with central WUF7 themes including urban equity, liveability, resilience and inclusion.

As such, the core goal of the event was to present and discuss best practices for citizen engagement (particularly while involving students) in the planning process. The event mainly engaged with the broad theme of "Urban Planning and Design" because of the specific planning work that it engaged, while lightly addressing "Risk Reduction and Rehabilitation" because of the vulnerability of the planning area in focus.





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

The discussion following the presentation focused on working directly with community members on urban development projects. Several session attendees shared their experiences in working with communities on planning processes and a general consensus was reached for best practices around community engagement and the dissemination of plans and planning material to communities. Specifically, the discussion covered the ways in which planners or politicians can present material to community members so that it is clear that their needs or concerns have been heard and properly represented. This is a particular challenge to students, who may not be familiar with the community and therefore face greater hurdles to immediate engagement with residents. At the same time however, students are often a less threatening and more accessible vehicle for presenting knowledge and expertise to a community, and as such are a useful mediator in the planning process. The discussion emphasized the need for clear, simple visual presentation of planning material to residents. Specifically, material should reflect the engagement process that was utilized (such as a community survey or workshop) and state clearly how information was gathered from residents and then incorporated into the specific plans being visualized.

Because of the focus on student and community engagement, attendees at the workshop were able to connect with the presenter on the material presented (the content of the plans, the specifics of the site) or the methods (styles of community engagement) or the partners involved (using students to perform planning work). The versatility led to a great discussion and a number of different informal connections for further conversation around student engagement at a variety of scales. Students and professionals were present and able to offer feedback, ask questions, and make connections for further discussion beyond WUF7.

Detail Information of Speakers/Presenters/Moderators:

Full name (Mr/Ms):	Ms. Margaret Scott
Nationality:	United States
Organization/Institution:	Harvard University Graduate School of Design
Time:	
Position:	Master in Urban Planning Candidate, 2015
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