

GUIDELINES

HABITAT III  
REGIONAL &  
THEMATIC  
MEETINGS



United Nations



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## BACKGROUND

In 2011 the United Nations General Assembly decided to convene the Habitat III Conference in line with the bi-decennial cycle (1976, 1996 and 2016). Habitat III is the United Nations Conference on Housing and sustainable Urban Development which will take place in Quito, Ecuador, on 17-20 October 2016.

The objectives of the Conference as established in the General Assembly resolution 67/216 are the following:

- a) to secure renewed political commitment for sustainable urban development;
- b) to assess the 1996 Habitat Agenda accomplishments to date;
- c) to address poverty and;
- d) to identify and address new and emerging challenges.

The Conference is expected to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable urbanization, focusing on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda that builds on the Habitat Agenda of Istanbul 1996.

The Conference should result in a concise, focused, forward-looking and action-oriented outcome document that will constitute the basis of a renewed commitment from all UN member states towards sustainable urbanization.

## HABITAT III AND OTHER GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS

The Conference comes at a critical moment in history in which, the goal of sustainable development is still to be fully achieved and new challenges have emerged especially related to the impact of climate change and growing inequality around the world. However, Habitat III will happen at a very opportune moment since, by then, the Post-2015 Development Agenda will be defined and a new agreement on climate change will hopefully be finalized.

It is against this backdrop and in the context of increased awareness on the importance of sustainable urbanization to achieve sound sustainable development, that a New Urban Agenda will be formulated ensuring coherence and synergy with the other development frameworks.

# HABITAT III PREPARATORY PROCESS AND OFFICIAL INPUTS

Being a United Nations conference, an outcome document will be issued as a result of a preparatory process and subsequent intergovernmental negotiations.

The preparatory process consists of three Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) meetings open to all United Nations member states. The first and second Prep-Com took place in New York in September 2014 and in Nairobi in April 2015 respectively led by a Bureau of members elected during PrepCom 1, while PrepCom 3 will take place on 25-27 July 2016 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

In order to substantively feed the intergovernmental discussions and deliberations as well as to broaden the participation and capture all relevant knowledge and views, the process has been complemented by different input gathering exercises that will be tabled for decision-making with the objective of enriching the principles, actions and tools towards the New Urban Agenda.

The official input gathering process includes the following:

## NATIONAL REPORTS

Prepared by member states to provide evidence based knowledge on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda at the national level since 1996.

## REGIONAL REPORTS

Prepared by the 5 UN Regional Economic and Social Commissions and UN-Habitat in collaboration with the Habitat III Secretariat, building on the national reports received and integrated by relevant researches and meetings outcomes.

## GLOBAL REPORT

Prepared by high level urban experts, coordinated by the Habitat III Secretariat, it will build on the outcomes and contents of National and Regional reports. It will include a comprehensive analysis on the global state of urbanization as well as good practices and tools both at the policy and intervention level.

## ISSUE PAPERS

A total of 22 stock taking papers on relevant topics will be developed through a collaborative exercise of the United Nations system coordinated by the Habitat III Secretariat. The finalized papers will be published on the HIII webpage for public comments and discussion. The official comments will be compiled and will constitute a complementary document to the Issue Papers.  
<http://unhabitat.org/issue-papers-and-policy-units>

## POLICY PAPERS

A total of 10 policy papers on relevant topics will be developed by policy units composed of 20 experts each, coming from different geographic areas and constituencies. The work of the policy units will be supported and coordinated by the Habitat III Secretariat.  
<http://unhabitat.org/issue-papers-and-policy-units>

## REGIONAL AND THEMATIC MEETINGS

A limited number of official regional and thematic high level meetings involving a wide range of participants, will debate priorities for the New Urban Agenda and issue recommendations in the form of a final participants' declaration. The final declarations from regional and thematic meetings will be considered official inputs to the Habitat III process and will be published on the Habitat III webpage.

In addition to the above mentioned outputs, **National and Regional Urban Forums** organized around the world with a strengthened focus on Habitat III and debates on country contributions towards a new global urban agenda will also complement the substantive gathering of inputs and recommendations ahead of the Conference in 2016.

**The Conference should result in a concise, focused, forward-looking and action-oriented outcome document that will constitute the basis of a renewed commitment from all UN member states towards sustainable urbanization.**



An aerial view of Mexico City and the Palace of Fine Arts © Jess Kraft - iStockphoto.com

## REGIONAL AND THEMATIC MEETINGS TOWARDS HABITAT III

As a result of a call for proposal, UN member states, local governments and other institutions expressed their interest in officially hosting a regional and/or thematic meeting for the preparatory process towards Habitat III.

A number of regional and thematic events were selected based on the quality of the proposal, relevance of the topics as well as envisaged participation and commitment to the Habitat III process.

The proposals foresaw the endorsement from National Government and included a financial contribution to the Habitat III trust-fund in addition to the direct costs of hosting the event, such as the conference facilities, registration and accreditation, interpretation services for the main sessions, operational and logistical needs with respective human resources at the venue, which will be separately dealt with by an agreement between the organizer and the Habitat III Secretariat.

The financial contribution from the organizer is supposed to include (but not be limited to) relevant stakeholders' participation (i.e. LDCs representatives, Civil society organizations, representatives of the General Assembly of Partners, members of the bureau of the Preparatory

Committee for Habitat III and UN staff), translation of final documents in all six UN languages, as well as the Habitat III Secretariat's participation and technical support including promotional activities.

Based on the above, an official agreement between the Habitat III Secretariat represented by the Secretary General of the Conference and the hosting institution will be signed. This document will include a main part, which sets out the general terms of the agreement and two annexes with the specifications related to the roles and responsibilities of the parties as well as a detailed list of what is included in the financial contribution to Habitat III and what is considered as direct cost of hosting the high level event.

## THEMATIC AND REGIONAL MEETINGS SCOPE

Thematic and regional meetings should have both an international scope, although the regional meetings may identify and address the topics based on regional considerations and prioritize regional geographical participation. In this regard it is assumed that a regional meeting will gather recommendations reflecting a consensus reached at the regional level on a specific topic or on the entire spectrum of a proposed new urban agenda. The thematic meetings which are based on specific and relevant topics will issue thematic recommendations.

# HOW TO ORGANIZE REGIONAL AND THEMATIC MEETINGS

As a preliminary step, after the signing of the agreement, the organizer will start liaising with the dedicated team at the Habitat III Secretariat to coordinate the organization of the event from its early stage.

An effective organization of Regional and Thematic events should take into consideration all the necessary arrangements and actions pertaining to the main aspects of this undertaken such as: a) Substantive programme and outcomes production; b) Communication and Promotion; c) Logistics.

In order to ensure a coordinated implementation of all the activities Working Groups / Committees can be established to deal with the three main areas mentioned above. The following are the most important activities grouped according to the respective area.

## A) SUBSTANTIVE PROGRAMME AND OUTCOMES PRODUCTION

### SELECT THE MAIN THEME OF THE MEETING

The selection of the theme may be based on the country priorities on sustainable urban development and in consideration of the available expertise and experience. The themes identified in the framework of the preparation of the Issue Papers for Habitat III may be used as a reference among others.

### IDENTIFY PROGRAMME FORMAT, DATES AND SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

It is important to choose the most effective format(s) that provides participants with the opportunity for open discussions, presentation of different positions from a variety of constituencies, facilitates consensus building and it is conducive to effective reporting and deliberations. The format may include plenaries and breakout sessions.

### PREPARE AND DISSEMINATE SESSIONS' CONCEPT NOTES

A brief concept note including the specific objective, a description of the format and the agenda should be

prepared for each sessions of the event. The concept notes properly designed should be published in good advance on the website as an informative document to attract the interest of participants.

### IDENTIFY SPEAKERS AND MODERATORS

Speakers and moderators should be identified according to subjects and session's format, taking into consideration competency and ensuring a fair balance in terms of gender, geographic origins and constituency group.

### ORGANIZE REPORTING OF SESSIONS AND A FINAL REPORT OF THE EVENT

Reporting mechanisms and templates should be organized to eventually facilitate the daily review of outcomes and the preparation of a final declaration including compilation of recommendations. A more comprehensive pictorial report can also be organized and published to disseminate results and gain visibility impact.

### ORGANIZE THE PREPARATION OF A FINAL DECLARATION WITH CLEAR RECOMMENDATIONS

An Advisory Board / Committee with representatives from all stakeholder groups, including the Habitat III Secretariat, should be organized to issue a final declaration with recommendations based on the outcomes from all sessions. To this end the Committee, which may be chaired by national and local government representatives when appropriate, should meet regularly every day of the event and discuss the major sessions' outcomes of the day. In the last day the Committee will issue the declaration to be presented during the closing ceremony, if any. A template for the declaration will be made available by the HIII Secretariat.

The final declaration will be delivered to the Habitat III Secretariat in the six United Nations official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish) It will be considered official contribution to the Habitat III process and published in the Habitat III webpage.

In addition and if relevant, please consider the following:

- // **A call for application for side events**  
Depending on the magnitude and ambition for the event, the organization of side events, training events and parallel sessions should be considered, including opening a call for proposals for such events jointly prepared with the Habitat III Secretariat.
- // **The set-up of e-debates platforms to discuss the topics**  
Set-up of an e-debate platform can be considered to feed the discussions before and during the event. Arrangements should be made with the Habitat III Secretariat for the hosting and effective management and moderation of the platform, including innovative approaches and methodologies.
- // **The enrichment of the event with cultural events programme**  
Taking advantage of the presence of local and international participants, cultural events including site visits, could be organized to promote the city and relevant urban projects and experiences.
- // **The set-up of an exhibition space**  
The organizers may consider opening an exhibition space and invite exhibitors through a call for applications jointly prepared with the Habitat III Secretariat. The exhibition would be adding on networking opportunities and knowledge sharing to the event as well as increasing attendance.

## B) COMMUNICATION AND PROMOTION

### PREPARE A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY AND PLAN FOR PROMOTION

The event can be promoted based on a solid communication strategy, including using the Habitat III website in addition to other means proposed by the organizers. Identification of the audience segments, build-up of a complete database of contacts and use of available platforms, networks and media relations should be prioritized among others.

The strategy should not only focus on the promotion of the event, but also on raising awareness on sustainable urban development and/or on the selected topic.

### IMPLEMENT THE HABITAT III BRANDING FOR THE EVENT

It will be important to implement the visual identity guidelines provided by the Habitat III Secretariat across all activities of the Regional and Thematic meetings.

### PREPARE AND SEND OFFICIAL INVITATIONS

A list of relevant invitees, including key partners and stakeholders, should be prepared and invitation letters sent not less than 1 month before the event.

### PREPARE PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL FOR DISSEMINATION

Aligned with the communication strategy and the visual identity guidelines promotional material should be prepared in consultation with the Habitat III Secretariat for the dissemination of the event and its topic.

### SET-UP A WEBPAGE AND ORGANIZE ITS MANAGEMENT

The organizers may consider setting up a website or using an existing one for mobilization and promotion, in addition to the Habitat III webpage. This should be done in consultation with the Habitat III Secretariat to ensure consistency and coherence.

### PLAN AND IMPLEMENT SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITIES

Social media activities should be considered in order to allow real-time participation within and outside the venue. Create your hashtag as follows: *#[theme/region]H3 - #AfricaH3 or #SmartCitiesH3*

It is recommended to always add the official hashtag #Habitat3 on your posts.

### CONTACT MEDIA AND PRESS

Relevant media representatives should be identified in advance and engaged to encourage good coverage from early preparations. Identify urban stories and relevant experts to be interviewed. Create media agreements for greater coverage.



## **PLAN PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO COVERAGE OF THE EVENT**

Consider creating a video/image bank open to all participants. Use the footage for social media promotion and for the elaboration of the final report. Consider to elaborate short video interviews to experts.

In addition and if relevant, please consider the following:

- // **Organize Urban Journalism Academies for the media group**
- // **Prepare and send newsletters/ email alerts to contact groups and interested people.**
- // **Prepare and implement marketing and advertising campaigns jointly with the Habitat III Secretariat including engaging local communities.**

## **C) LOGISTICS**

### ***LOGISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS***

#### **ORGANIZE ON-LINE REGISTRATION OPENED SUFFICIENTLY IN ADVANCE**

This will help to plan the event and reduce the pressure on the on-site accreditation. Accurate registration of participants is essential to the management of the event as well as for future analysis and reporting.

#### **ORGANIZE ON-SITE ACCREDITATION AND BADGING**

All efforts should be made in order to avoid long queues and reducing waiting time. This is important as it is the first impression the participants will get of the event. Participants will be asked permission to receive further Habitat III communications.

### ***LOGISTICS OF SPACES***

#### **ENSURE EFFECTIVE SIGNAGE AND INFORMATION DESKS**

Participants should be able to easily locate and orient themselves within the venue, hence effective signage and information desk should be provided, in accordance with the complexity of the venue space.

## **ORGANIZE MEETING ROOMS SET UP AND EQUIPMENT**

Enough personnel should be deployed in the meeting rooms in order to ensure appropriate set-up and management of the technical equipment.

## **ORGANIZE AND MANAGE A MEDIA CENTRE AND A PRESS CONFERENCE ROOM**

In order to be able to make use of the advantages of good media coverage and allow smooth participation of media representatives, the set-up of a media centre and/or conference room should be seriously considered.

## **ORGANIZE ADEQUATE SPACES FOR USE BY ORGANIZERS AND OTHER NEEDS OF PARTICIPANTS**

Office spaces and meeting rooms for the organizers including the reporting teams should be created. The host should also ensure spaces for speakers and moderators as well as for VIP guests.

As meetings are expected to have high number of participants, other arrangements such as catering, banking and communication facilities should also be planned.

## **OFFICIAL LANGUAGES AND INTERPRETATION**

As a minimum requirement, Regional and Thematic meetings must have adequate interpretation to English and the host country language. Additional languages maybe added based on specific needs and availability of financial resources and expertise.

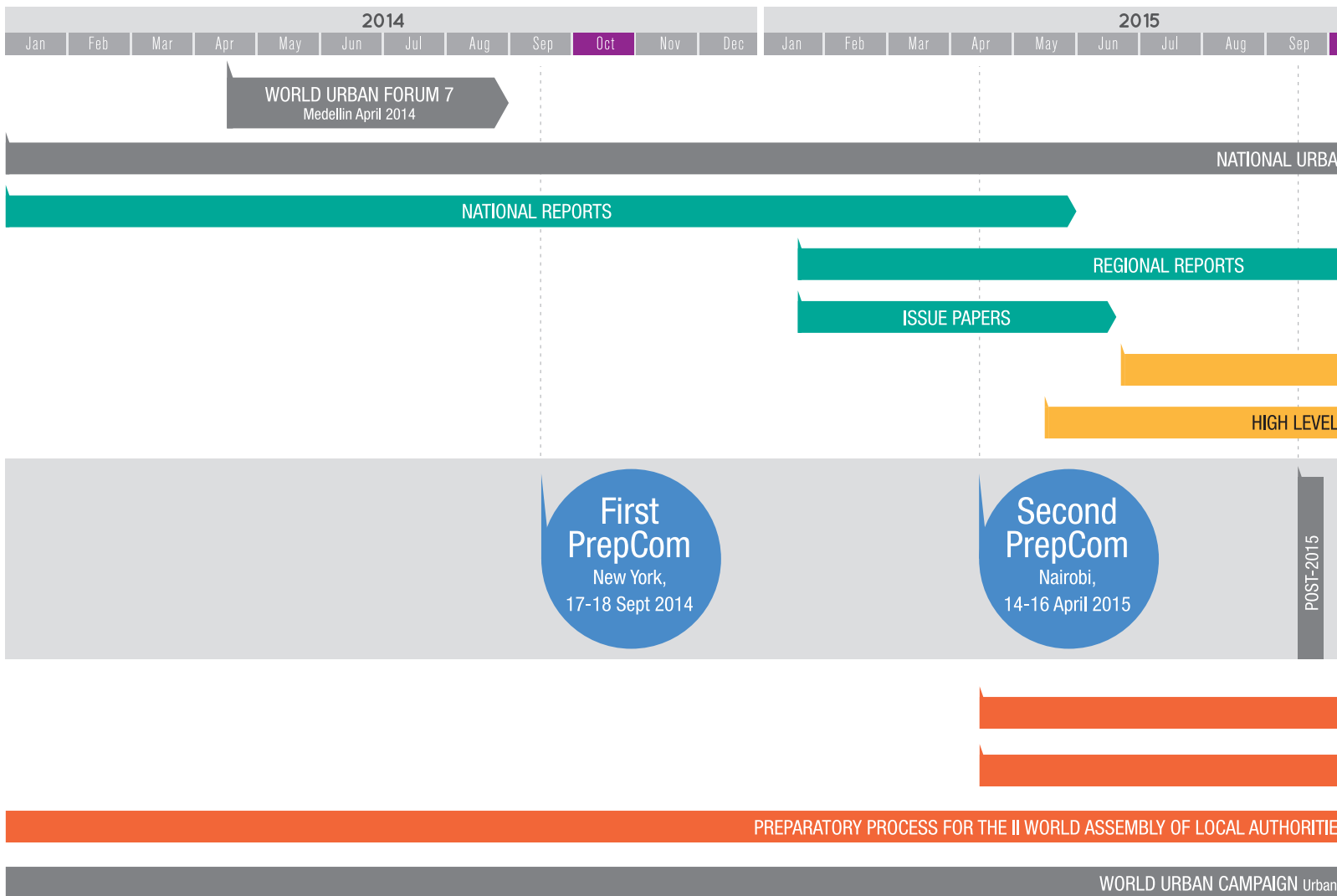
## **VOLUNTEERS PROGRAMME**

Consider implementing a Volunteers programme aimed at students from other cities and regions to support the organization of the event and leave a tangible legacy for the benefit of young people.

# ROADMAP TOWAR

**Knowledge**  
Monitoring and research

**Policy**  
Commitment and action

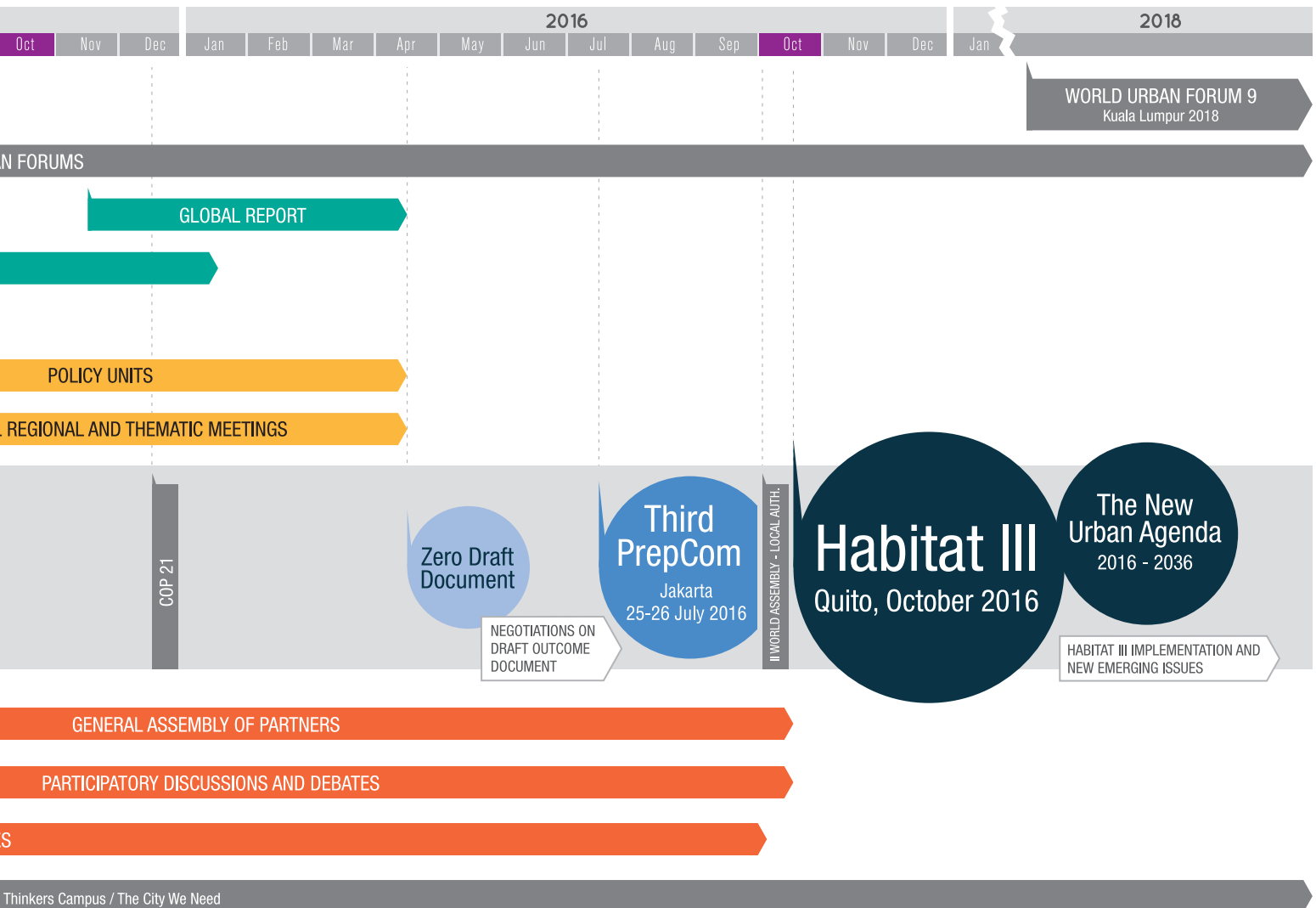


# ROADS HABITAT III



**Engagement**  
Building consensus

**Urban October**  
World Habitat Day, World Cities Day





[www.habitat3.org](http://www.habitat3.org)