

USSF OBSERVATION GUIDE/ QUESTIONNAIRE:
(Last modified April 20, 2010)

This collaborative project to collect systematic observation notes on the USSF will contribute to the work of evaluating the extent to which workshops, cultural events, and other spaces that are part of the Forum help advance the WSF goals of global movement- and coalition-building.

For each workshop you observe, record the details requested in the questionnaire below. Shortly after attending the workshop, record more detailed reflections on the workshop, particularly as they relate to questionnaire's open-ended items (XX##) and to the key questions/themes guiding this research:

- *Does this workshop include participation from **under-represented groups**? (i.e., people of color, poor people, women, gender-diverse, and physically disabled)
- *Do you see evidence of the use of particular **models or strategies of conflict mediation** or techniques for managing differences within the group (i.e., differences across movements, identities, political orientations)?
- *Does the workshop appear to contribute to the strengthening or formation of **long-term alliances or coalitions**?
- *Does the workshop **link scales of action** between local and national or global levels?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Title of event:

2. Date:

3. Event description: you can copy the description in the program

4. Estimated number of attendees:

< 10 10-20 20-50 50-100 >100

5. Describe the composition of attendees in terms of:

Est. % (or M/F ratio) Male _____ Est. % Female _____

Age: % persons < 30 yrs _____ % persons 30-50 yrs. _____ % persons > 50 yrs. _____

Racial composition of audience (Indicate rough % of audience who is (by outward appearance):

____ White ____ Black ____ Middle Eastern ____ Native /indigenous
____ Asian Other _____ (list)

Were non-English speakers present? If so, what languages were used? _____

6. Describe panelists: name, organizational affiliation, nationality (if not U.S.) etc.

7. Identify the principal format of the event – i.e. was the workshop designed primarily to:
- provide information and analyses
 - share organizing ideas and skills
 - develop collaborative networks or alliances
 - other

7a: To what extent did the event emphasize the following USSF goals?
(rank from 0-5 with 0 indicating ‘not addressed’; 3 = ‘about half of program emphasized this goal’ and 5 meaning ‘extensive emphasis’).

USSF Goals:

- 1) Contribute to movement-building in the United States by:
 - Strengthening local movement capacity
 - Building stronger relationships and collaboration between movements
 - Advancing a common agenda for action and transformation
- 2) Support organizing and movement building in Detroit
- 3) Create a space for social movement convergence and strategic discussion
- 4) Deepen our commitment to international solidarity and common struggle

8. Summarize the speakers’ main points, audience responses and any debates that arose during the event.

9. Were plans for specific actions or future campaigns discussed? If yes, please describe them.

10. Were any coalitions discussed? If yes, please describe them—i.e., what sort of groups were coming together? Is it a transnational alliance? Were these formed as part of the US Social Forum process (i.e., in Atlanta in 2007)?

11. Describe any evidence of networking you see among attendees, such as exchanges of cards or emails, providing of information about other organizers or groups working on related area, etc. [before/during/after sessions].

12. Describe any conversations with attendees in terms of their impressions of the forum, its usefulness to their work, its impacts on their thinking about future activities, etc.

13. EVENT TYPE: Check the items that most closely describe the format of this workshop

Workshops to promote specific campaigns

- Single-issue workshops
- Linking Workshops
- Workshops about the forums/ WSF process
- Political/Ideological workshops- socialism, workers, alternative economic paradigms, anarchism, autonomy, etc.

____ Other (describe)_____

14. ACTIONS: Indicate if any of the following activities were present at this session. (Scale from 0-3 with 0 being ‘none’ and 3 meaning ‘extensive’)

- ____ Consciousness-raising/ Education
- ____ Articulating alternative vision
- ____ Experience sharing
- ____ International connections/experiences
- ____ Joint Action (e.g., signing petition, marching, sit-in)
- ____ Planning for future organizing (coalition, event) specify
- ____ Mobilizing—e.g., local actions in support of wider campaign
- ____ People’s Movement Assembly
- ____ Detroit-solidarity action

15. Which of the following was mentioned at this session? (Scale from 0-3 with 0 being ‘not mentioned’ and 3 meaning ‘extensive discussion’)

- ____ “new” politics (or political strategies outside the political party/lobby system)
- ____ World Social Forum-Dakar
- ____ World Social Forum process or International Council
- ____ The next US Social Forum
- ____ International experiences, groups, or networks
- ____ Understanding current political “moment” (i.e., financial crisis/ climate crisis)

16. Please describe the extent to which the event contributed, in your assessment, to each the following goals:

- 1) Contribute to movement-building in the United States by:
 - Strengthening local movement capacity
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- 2) Support organizing and movement building in Detroit
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Informal interviews with participants in the USSF

While you’re attending the US Social Forum, you will have many chance encounters with other participants. Try to get a sense of what has brought people to the USSF in Detroit. Is this their first experience of the US or World Social Forums? Are they experienced activists or not? Where have they come from and how did they get to Detroit? What organization(s) are they connected with? Record what you can of these encounters, and if you find people who are willing to be part of our follow up study, please record their email and other contact information. We may wish to contact them about their activism following the US Social Forum.