

Using the SUMO Methodology

SUMO was the process that was followed in order to evaluate the MOVE project at every stage of the project. This was a new methodology to use during the course of the project so there was a lot of learning and re-learning as each of the local projects progressed through the implementation stages.

This section of the report examines how the individual partners used the SUMO methodology in their local projects. There were many pitfalls of the process that could only be recognised by working through the process. There were also many advantages and positive aspects to following the SUMO methodology. It allowed the partner countries to really think about every step of the implementation process instead of jumping in head first.

It was important to evaluate what the partners thought about the SUMO methodology, describe their findings / experiences and to highlight important aspects that may have been overlooked at the start of the local projects. SUMO did imply additional resource constraints that had not been foreseen and this was only established and discussed as a result of this SUMO evaluation.

A survey was sent out to the partners in the MOVE project with questions surrounding personal opinions, the relevance of external factors and additional training aspects that became evident as a result of following the methodology. The results were collected, evaluated and discussed together thereafter. The results of this survey can be found in the following sections.

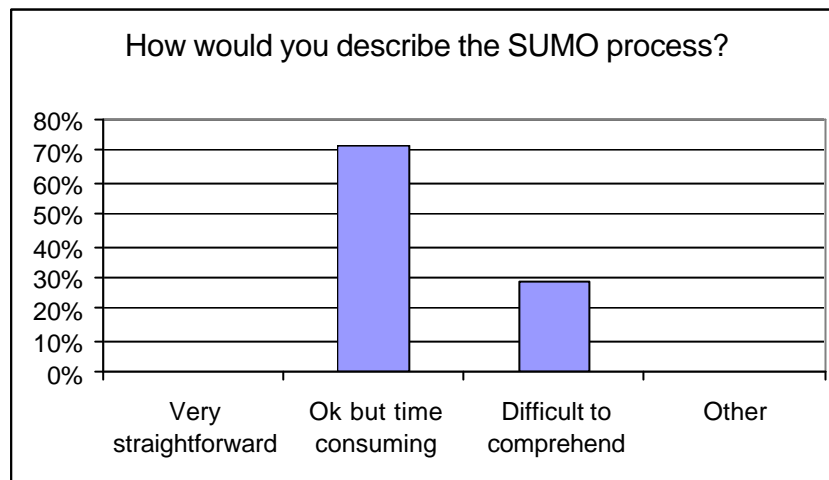
- ? Partner opinion of the SUMO process
- ? Use of the SUMO process
- ? The influence of external and people factors on results
- ? Training aspects of SUMO

? Learning from the SUMO process

Partner Opinion of the SUMO process

Figure 1 indicates that the SUMO process was described by most as ok but time consuming, with “time consuming” being a salient feature of the methodology.

Figure 1 Overall Personal Opinion of the SUMO process

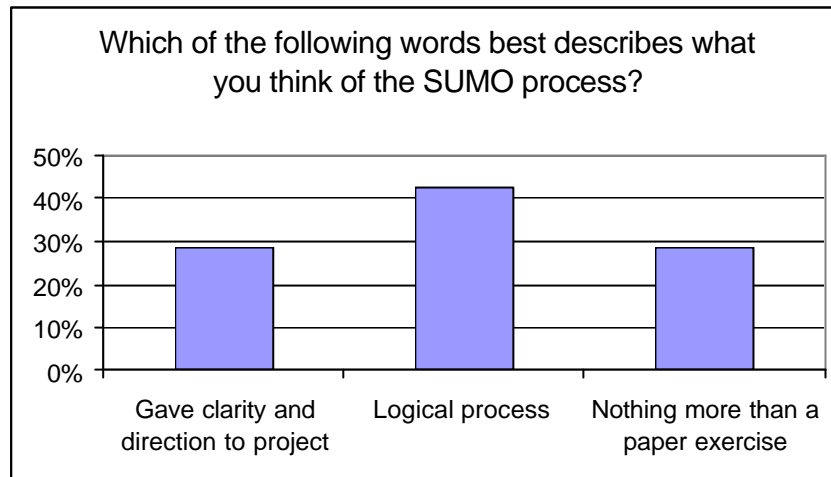


There were many chosen levels of analysis to assess as part of this SUMO methodology. Before the local project even started there were background and external factors to be assessed. Then when these factors were established there was a promotion of the ideas stage. This promotion of ideas was also assessed to quantify how many people had been reached by the idea. People’s satisfaction with the ideas proposed was also assessed before any implementation had commenced. Therefore, there was a high degree of analysis even before any implementation has begun. After implementation there was further assessment of satisfaction levels with the alternative options and an assessment of permanent change in behaviour.

This degree of analysis was not only difficult for first time SUMO users to comprehend but it was also very time consuming because it involved doing multiple surveys of a target group to assess the base conditions firstly, the interest in ideas proposed, the take

up of the ideas over a period time, the satisfaction of the trial alternative transport and a permanent change in behaviour thereafter.

Figure 2 Description of the SUMO Process



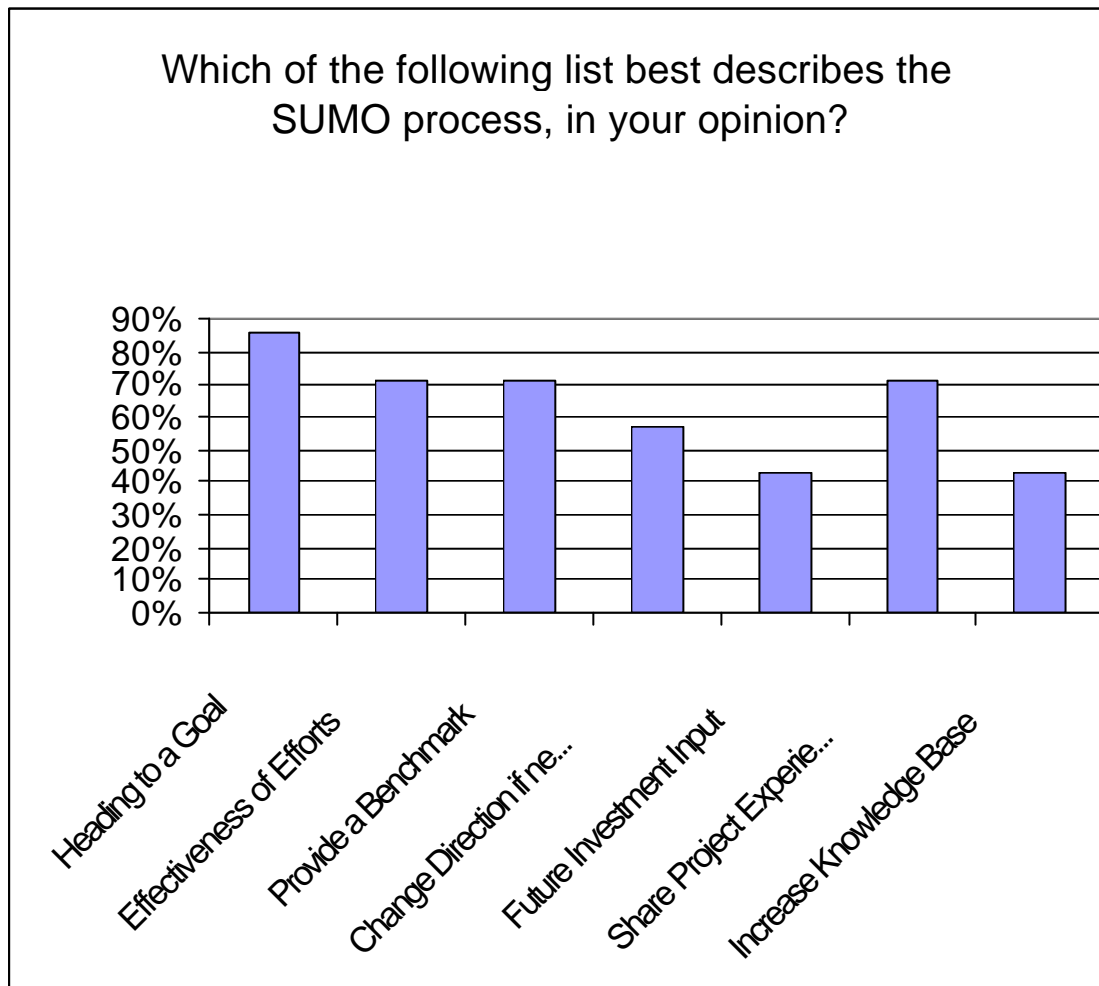
Although the process was described as time consuming and difficult to comprehend, as the partners worked through the methodology the majority of the partners found the process useful. They found that it gave clarity and direction to the project and was a logical process. Because SUMO forces the user to evaluate every step of the process from start to finish, it was very easy to notice if the local project was on-track or off-track.

One of the partner countries that described the process as nothing more than a paper exercise was a country whose local project was mainly an awareness campaign so only background information and external factors were required. This is the first stage of the SUMO process so really a full SUMO methodology was not required for this project.

The other partner country that thought of SUMO as a paper exercise rather than a logical clear path for their project struggled with the implementation of the project because too little time was spent checking the results of the initial background and external factors versus the targets that were required to be deem the project on-track.

Figure 3 sums up the SUMO process for all of the partners in the MOVE project. Therefore in summary the best reason to use the SUMO process was because it is goal-orientated. The other popular choice for using SUMO was that it assesses every possible level of the project and will evaluate the effectiveness of the efforts. Because it was a common methodology, it was a great choice for a group project because it allows you to benchmark between the different project approaches, to reapply aspects from different projects and compare similar projects through their completed SUMO templates.

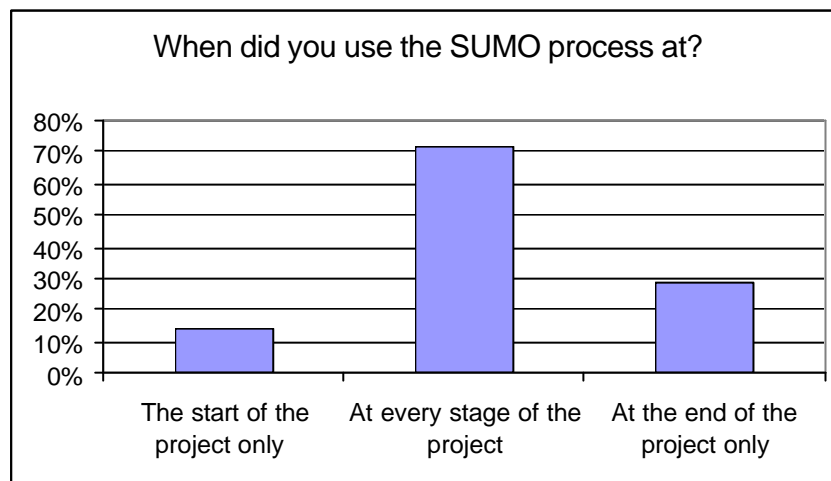
Figure 3 Overview of the SUMO process



Use of the SUMO process

For the SUMO process to work well, the user picks a certain number of assessment levels. One should only measure what is necessary to measure. Each chosen level of analysis should then be addressed at each stage of the project. Through discussion with the partners of the MOVE project it was decided that this is not always the case. As can be seen in figure 3, projects that were mainly awareness campaigns did not require many levels of analysis and so the SUMO process was only necessary at the start and at the end of the project.

Figure 3 The Use of SUMO



It is clear that the use of SUMO is extremely project specific. The methodology works best when the project includes all of the following: research, awareness, promotion, implementation and permanent behavioural change. It can be used but isn't as effective in awareness campaigns alone.

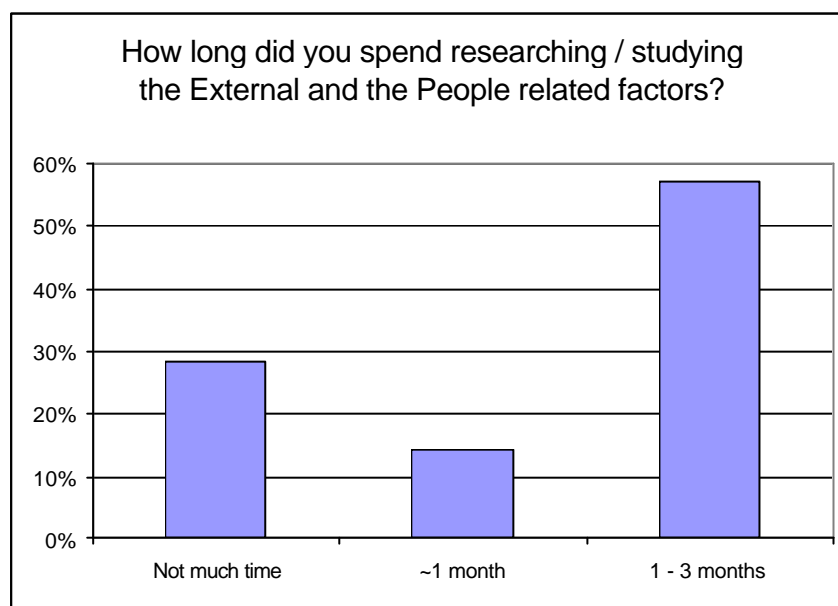
The Influence of External and People Factors on the Project

It was very important at the start of the project to research the people related factors and the external factors. This group or sample of people would prove to be one of the key factors for success in the local project. For example, one of the most important aspects of the project and in some cases overlooked was setting up a well-defined target group. It was necessary to survey this group at various intervals over the course of the project so

the sample group needed to be accessible, defined and willing to participate in the project.

Researching all the external factors were also extremely important in order to find out what could be implemented successfully or what barriers / opportunities may become evident over the course of the project.

Figure 4 Researching External and People Related Factors

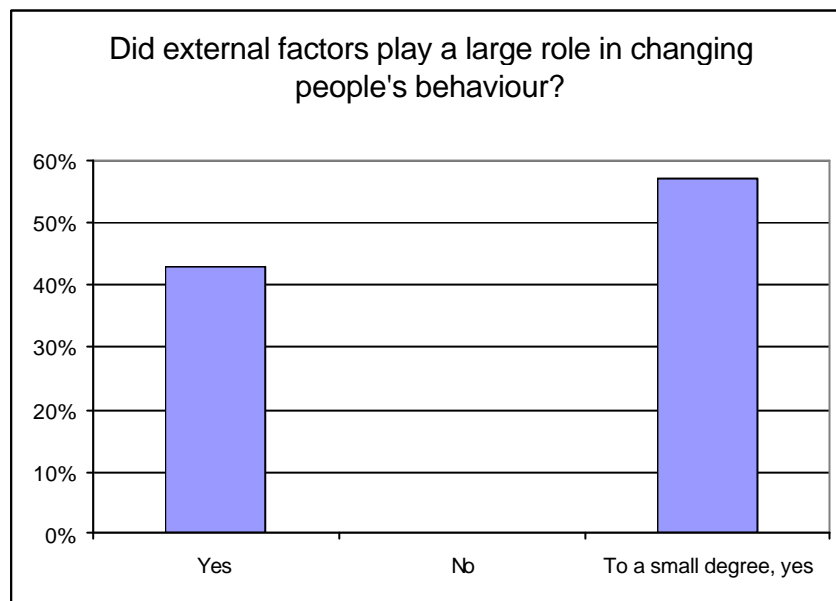


As can be seen in Figure 4, the majority of the partners spent a long period of time researching and studying the external and people related factors. As stated earlier, some of the countries that did not spend much time researching these factors and defining the target group correctly struggled later when trying to follow up on further aspects of the methodology. Other countries may have had well-defined target group in mind and already had a good working relationship with the group.

External factors did in fact influence the results of the project. This is illustrated in Figure 5 where all of the MOVE partners agreed that external factors did play a role in helping to change people's behaviours. Some external factors such as the rise in the price of oil

and the resulting price hike in diesel and petrol did influence people to start to think about changing their behaviour. The huge publicity in the media with regards to climate change and global warming which in 2005/06 was not present to play a large role in influencing peoples change in behaviour.

Figure 5 The Result of External Factors on the MOVE project



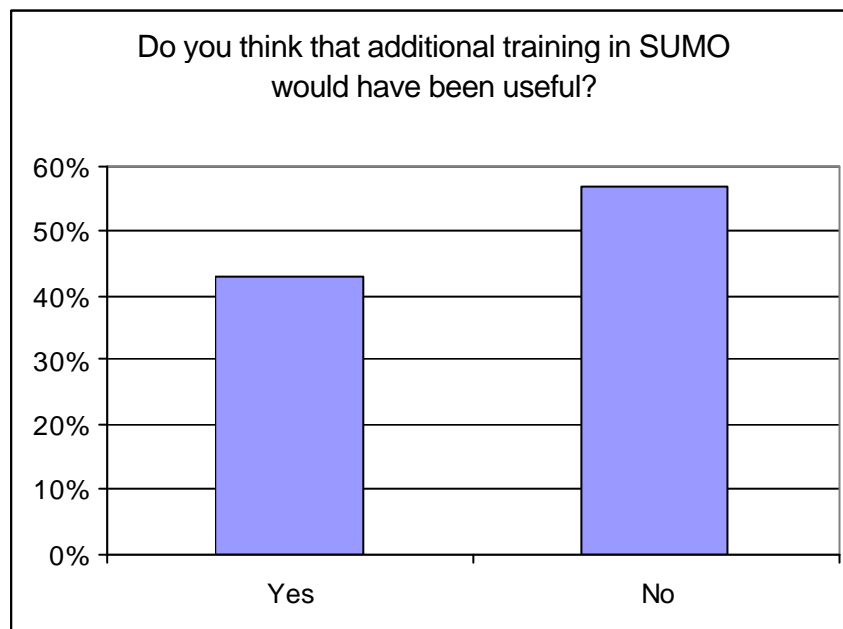
However, these two examples of global external factors became entangled in the MOVE project and the local projects themselves were necessary to provide an alternative for the individual. Therefore, from this point of view the MOVE project helped to provide alternatives and support. The MOVE project reduced the panic and hardship that rising oil prices and imminent global warming publicity provided.

Described above are factors at a global level. External factors at a local level also had a part to play in the success of the local projects. For example, an external factor such as the lack of footpaths, bad weather and dark winter mornings would hamper the success of a Walking Bus project. This example only proves the point that a lot of initial research is required to assess all possible external factors because they will inevitably have a huge impact on the project success.

4.3.4 Training Aspects of SUMO

It has already been discussed about the time resource required to complete the different surveys at the various levels of the SUMO methodology. However, in the training on the SUMO process there was never any training on how to compile and design a good survey. Survey plays a huge role in the SUMO process yet the SUMO training assumed that all the partners were able to do this.

Figure 6 Additional Training required carrying out SUMO



This aspect of the project was discussed in great detail with all the partners. A unanimous conclusion was made that training or external help in survey design and survey implementation is a definite requirement for anyone who decides to implement a project using the SUMO methodology.

Learning from the SUMO Process

In summary, it was found that the SUMO process was a logical process and it gave clarity and direction to the project. It was a useful methodology to use in a group project because it allowed partners to share experiences, to benchmark experiences at various

levels and to know whether they were on course or off course in achieving the goals set out in the project.

One of the surprises or the unexpected outcomes of following the SUMO methodology was the large time resource required in carrying out surveys at the various levels.

However, this also tied in with the fact that there was a gap in the training provided with SUMO. There was no training in effective survey design and survey implementation. An important part of survey implementation is defining the target group. If this was not set correctly at the start, it was difficult at later stages of the project to get good data.

This lack of survey design and implementation training is one of the key learnings that evolved as result of evaluating the SUMO process. Therefore, it is recommended to include this element of training with the SUMO methodology training in the future.

Finally, external factors do play a role in the success of the project. They can either play a positive role in influencing a change in behaviour or a negative role in hindering change. Whatever their role, it was the responsibility of the MOVE project to understand the external factors, to provide alternatives to negate the impact of these factors and to support the individuals with awareness and promotional materials to reduce the impact that these external factors had on the target group.