The Hague Housing Conference

Terms of References for the focus group **Financing mechanisms for affordable housing Strategies to address urban polarization**Strategies to address the urban polarizationStrategies to address the urban polarization

14 February 2013, 14.30- 16.00

Bel Air Hotel, The Hague

**Purpose**

The world population is increasingly urbanizing and that is happening particularly in the south of the world. In sub-Saharan areas, urbanization usually generates urban poverty in *slums* or *bidonvilles* where the cleverest informal economies develop. In principle urban planning in developing countries is a key tool to achieve economic development and to build a good governance environment. Instead of being clear, effective and operative the approach to urban planning in developing countries is still general, controversial and debatable.

Only some determined mayors in South America have recently used urban planning, together with their power, to produce urban and economic development.

In the meanwhile the major donors hesitate while waiting for urban planning to develop full potentials through good practices (which are usually hidden as they do not comply with the requirements of the Academia).

The questions that arise are: would it be possible to rethink urban planning starting from field working experiences in developing countries ? Which could be the most appropriate technologies, aiming at (a) reducing the drafting duration, (b) linking the spatial development to the population growth, (c) identifying sustainable development spatial issues, (d) giving emphasis to participation and (e) to common interests and an equitable use of common resources. Summing up, how could urban planning revive starting from developing countries ? What could be the expected role of donors ?

The focus group will try and understand the reason of an apparent fail of urban planning in developing countries and at the same time it will make concrete proposals to draft plans and launch urban development.

During the discussion government officers, practitioners and academics will exchange their perspectives and experiences and will draft key operational recommendations for urban planning practitioners. The focus group intends to explore how urban planning could perform in different countries and to consider how such performance might be enhanced with innovative or basic activities. A case study will be presented by the invited speakers to boost the discussion.

**Composition**

We expect around 10-12 participants. Participants will be government officers, practitioners, academics.

**Corresponding stakeholders**

Corresponding stakeholders are the individuals and organizations that wish to be informed about the outputs of the focus group on *Strategies to address urban polarization*and want to be involved in the organization of The Hague Housing Conference that will take place in 2014.

**Main outputs of the Focus group**

Minutes of the Panel will be drafted by the moderators and the Conference secretary and they will be presented in the form of short recommendations during the closing plenary by the chair of the Conference. The minutes of the meeting will be collected in the conference publication, they will serve as official record of the Focus group and will be circulated among the interested parties that could join the Conference.

*The overall programme of the conference is available online*: [*http://www.ifhp.org/event/hague-housing-conference*](http://www.ifhp.org/event/hague-housing-conference)