Social Housing –
Giving Poor People the Choice

Workshop Group 5
Improving access to housing Roma: Good Local Practices, funding and legislation

Pragua Pyramida: 2-4 February 2011
Speakers

- **Maurizita Tovo**  
  (World Bank)

- **Mona Pisacariu**  
  (Habitat for Humanity, Romania)

- **Martina Mikeszova**  
  (Czech Academy of Science)

- **Mina Petrovic**  
  (Belgrad University)

Introduction (5 minutes)

For speakers:
  - Presentation (20 minutes)
  - Discussion (10 minutes)

General discussion (25 minutes)

Conclusion: ideas for reporting back (5 minutes)
Social housing in post socialist countries – main factors (after 20 years) – 1.

Social, political changes:

- Inequality – significant proportion of population has serious affordability problem
- Spatial consequences of income inequality (and discrimination) – segregated settlements
- Decentralization and fragmentation of central government -- social and housing issues are rarely responsibility of one unit of government
- Demography and migration: lower pressure on housing market
Social housing in post socialist countries – main factors (after 20 years) – 2.

- Housing sector
  - Privatisation/restitution – limited scope for traditional public rental solution (Cooperatives turned into quasi-owner-occupied tenure)
  - Illegal construction and tenure situation (South-East Europe)
  - Private rental: new landlord-tenant relation
  - Housing subsidies were reduced because of general pressure on budget sources
  - Business lobbies dominate the budget game – weak lobby strengths of the social sector
Social housing in post socialist countries – main factors (after 20 years) – 3.

- Social housing policy -- need for paradigm change

**Definition of social housing**: policy intervention to make adequate housing affordable for low income peoples

**Key terms**:
- policy interventions
- adequate housing
- low income
Key term – policy intervention

- Income redistributions (tax examinations, income supplements, housing allowances, mikro-finance programs etc.),
- Social/public rental programs: municipal rental, non-profit programs, renting agencies
- Home-ownership program (support with conditions, mikro-finance program)
Key term – adequate housing

- Substandard or low standard housing (social and fiscal consideration)
- Segregated or mixed neighborhood
- Housing estates (limitation to influence housing consumptions) – is it adequate for everybody
- Low cost or high cost housing (but it leads to „low income” problem)
Key term – low income

- Poverty level (depends on income distribution)
- Poverty trap
- Informal economy – difficulty to measure income
- Implicit subsidies (through rents, user charges, etc.)
Housing policy for social (ethnic) groups in deep poverty: „very social housing”

- Special programs versus general
- Role of intermediaries: social work by public authorities or ngos
- Access and sustainability
- Community building
- Managing the low-middle class opposition
- Anti-segregation programs