

## Concept Note

### Asia Policy Dialogue – Panel Discussion on the Housing Sector

#### Background

According to UN Habitat, Asia is urbanising at the fastest rate in the world and a third of households in Asia live in slums and informal settlements. The pace of rapid socio-economic development, population growth, urbanisation and consequent changes in social structure brought about many challenges to the sustainability of cities and housing problems (such as slumisation, unaffordable housing prices, deterioration of community values and increasing poverty in urban areas) are one of the most critical issues that the region is encountering today.

The vast majority of Asian countries are experiencing common housing problems, but to varying degree depending on the stage of urbanisation and institutional arrangements. Many Asian countries are attempting to resolve the issues with different approaches. For instance, some countries opted for resolving issues through social housing (community, cooperative ownership / government provision), shared houses. There are also cases of active inclusion of vulnerable groups through the provision of secured land tenures and provision of housing finance, particularly targeting low income households who have low credits for accessing loans.

This session aims to discuss Asia's innovative solutions for the housing problems based upon two broad approaches: 1) the social economy and 2) multisector collaboration.

- 1) The notion of social economy encompasses a wide range of alternative socio-economic development models which aims for inclusive, equitable and sustainable development. Some of the major components of the social economy, such as social enterprises, cooperatives, social finance, and urban regeneration can be utilized as an innovative vehicle for tackling the housing problems.
- 2) The housing issues can only be effectively resolved through multisector cooperation between public – private – communities. Asia is the region whereby the housing problems are emerging most drastically, but at the same time, it is the region where most innovative solutions are coming from based on multisector collaborations.

#### Overview

As one of the main sessions of the Asia Policy Dialogue, GSEF is organising a panel discussion on the *housing sector*. The central theme of the session is 'resolve the housing issues through the social economy (i.e. social finance/ social innovation / cooperatives / social enterprises, etc.)'. Also, speakers are asked to reflect project collaborations between government, private sector (e.g. real estate developer) and the intermediary (organisation that brings the project together).

Three cases from different region of Asia (East Asia: Korea, South East Asia: Cambodia, South Asia: India) will be presented. The session will be an opportunity to learn distinctiveness of Asian housing problems while finding out regional variations within the region and different ways of approaching the problems based on each country's different institutional arrangements, stage of urbanisations and socio-economic status.

## Objectives

- Framing housing problems in Asia region
- Finding innovative solutions through the social economy and multi-sector collaboration
- Promoting regional dialogues on the housing sector with regard to the UN Habitat III
- Providing tailored policy advices

## Participants

No.	Name	Organistaion	Country	Category	Designation
1	Vishunu Swaminathan	Ashoka Foundation 'Housing for All'	India	Speaker	Country Director
2	Kif Nguyen	Habitat for Humanity	Cambodia		National Director
3	Jewon Lee	Toad Housing	Korea		Director
4	Bruno Dercon	UN Habitat Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific	Japan	Moderator	Senior Human Settlements Officer

## Presentation Outline

Presenters: There is no fixed format of presentation. However, there is a time limit for each presentation (10min max) and we would like to ask each presenter broadly answer three main questions through their presentations.

- 1) A brief overview of housing problems in their respective city/country
- 2) Initiative/projects of resolving housing issues through the social economy and multisector collaboration
- 3) Policy recommendations (with link to the UN SDGs / Habitat III where relevant)

Moderator: Providing overview of the distinctiveness of Asian housing problems and ways to implement creative solutions in relation to the Habitat III. Setting the tone of the session and wrapping up discussions.

## Session Details / Structure

Venue: Regal Kowloon Hotel, 71 Mody Road, Tsimshatsui, Hong Kong – Luxembourg Room, Level 3

Time: 14:00 – 14:45 pm

Time	Presenter	Organistaion	Contents
14:00 14:05	Bruno Dercon	UN Habitat Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific	<i>A brief overview of the session</i>
14:05 14:15	Vishunu Swaminathan	Ashoka Foundation	<i>The Indian Case</i>
14:15 14:25	Kif Nguyen	Habitat for Humanity	<i>Cambodian Case</i>
14:25 14:35	Jewon Lee	Toad Housing	<i>Korean Case</i>
14:35 14:45	Facilitated by Bruno Dercon	UN Habitat Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific	Discussion / Q&A Wrap up

Audience: 60 pax of government officials from Asia, including Hong Kong, China, Korea, Japan, Singapore, India, Myanmar, Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Pakistan and Sri Lanka

## Timelines

Submission of presentation papers (ppt/word/etc.) by the **10<sup>th</sup> of May (Monday)**

- Using visual aids at the session is up to the presenters. Regardless, we ask presenters to submit description of presentation contents to share with other presenters and moderator prior to the event (10<sup>th</sup> of May).



## Travel Arrangement

Travel expenses of participating in the APD will be covered by the APD team.

AVPN (APD Secretariat) is in contact with all participants of the session for logistical arrangements (flights/accommodation).

For any further question regarding your travel arrangements, please contact Debbie Fang (Event Associate, AVPN)  
[debbie@avpn.asia](mailto:debbie@avpn.asia)

For further information and if you would like to comment on the structure of the session, please contact: [gsef@gsef-net.org](mailto:gsef@gsef-net.org)

Organised by:



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