



*“Human settlements development is an integral part of socio-economic development in South Eastern Europe. Strategic urban development and functioning housing markets catalyse economic growth and allow for more equitable distribution of social as well as economic opportunities.”*

## **BACKGROUND & KEY CHALLENGES**

- Transition process has had a negative impact on urban governance and housing delivery. This has led to uncontrolled urbanisation, significant reduction of economic growth opportunities, increased social exclusion, lack of respect for the rule of law, decay of social infrastructure and overburdened municipal budgets.
- Lack of institutional and human capacity to design and implement urban projects at national and local level.
- Need for strategic and action-oriented planning approaches to enable sustainable urban development, capturing domestic and foreign investments for municipal development and the creation of sustainable communities.

## **ROLE & STRATEGY OF THE INITIATIVE**

- Establish a regional framework for investments, capacity building and self-sustaining regional co-operation through the development of a long-term “Regional Capacity Strengthening Programme for Urban Development and Housing in SEE (RCSP)” - together with SEE Governments, IFIs and UN-HABITAT.
- Support Governments in implementing the commitments made under the Vienna Declaration on Informal Settlements in SEE.
- Improve sectoral policies in SEE through pro-active facilitation of regional stakeholder meetings.
- Promote academic co-operation for sustainable housing and urban development.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE & THE WAY AHEAD**

- Final programme document for Regional Capacity Strengthening Programme (2007-2010) endorsed by all stakeholders; Interim programme management structures in place; Pilot demonstration activities to be implemented in 2006.
- SEE Governments established detailed action-plans to implement Vienna Declaration commitments; 3<sup>rd</sup> regional peer review meeting in May 2006: Progress in putting legal frameworks in place; Pilot initiatives emerging on local level.
- Consortium of EU & SEE Universities to formulate project proposal to be submitted under Research Framework Programme 7 (FP7) of the European Commission.

## **CONTACT**

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