

Winners and Finalists 2018



About

Each year the World Habitat Awards – organised in partnership with UN-Habitat – are presented to ten of the most outstanding and innovative housing ideas, projects and programmes from across the world. This brochure showcases their inspirational activity.

Awards Judge Maimunah Mohd Sharif, UN-Habitat Executive Director, said: “I am proud that UN-Habitat supports the work of communities and people to innovate towards more sustainable and affordable housing solutions. The 2018 World Habitat Award Winners and Finalists promote housing solutions that change people’s lives and contribute to their well-being.”

Awards Judge Leilani Farha, the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing, said: “These projects put the right to housing in action, transforming and empowering some of the most vulnerable communities and neighbourhoods at a time when housing challenges across the world are heightened. Through their work, they are demonstrating what is possible; I hope their housing solutions will inspire similar rights-based projects where they are needed most.”

David Ireland, Chief Executive of World Habitat, funders and co-ordinators of the World Habitat Awards, said: “Our ten Winners and Finalists have had an enormous impact on individuals, families and communities by providing them with somewhere safe and secure to live. Through these improvements, their health is significantly better, and their futures are brighter and more positive.”

Full details can be found at www.worldhabitatawards.org.

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Winner

Affordable and safe housing for single mothers Japan

Little Ones works with property owners, estate agents and local government to acquire empty or abandoned homes. They are renovated using government subsidies and rented out to single mothers at discounted rates. It can be hard for single mothers to find an affordable place to live because it is difficult for women to work after having children in Japan and they are often assumed to be financially unstable. Social stigma, lack of economic opportunities and high living costs in cities like Tokyo mean the majority of single mothers and their children live below the poverty line.

Resident Yoshiko Suzuki said: "I was in a state of total panic when I received an eviction notice. I would become a homeless single mother. I came across Little Ones on the internet. They replied almost immediately with words of kindness and an open heart. Three days after I contacted them, they found me an apartment. After my eviction and so many rejections, the apartment seemed like a dream to me and my son. This new home has given us a new start in life."

www.npolittleones.com



Winner

Pakistan Chulahs: The smokeless stoves empowering women and changing lives Pakistan

This programme, run by the Heritage Foundation of Pakistan, teaches marginalised women to build a hygienic, sustainable, smokeless earthen stove, which not only improves their health but also empowers them to earn a living by marketing and building stoves in other villages. Chulah stoves use 50-70 per cent less firewood than traditional stoves, reducing deforestation and saving valuable time. Smoke from traditional open-flame wood-burning stoves can cause serious respiratory infections and eye problems. In addition, food cooked on these floor-mounted stoves is easily contaminated leading to diarrhoea, especially in children.

Champa, who has helped build 14,000 stoves with her husband, said: “The ladies always ask about the benefit of the stoves. Since it is placed at a certain height, it does not cause harm to the children, not even toddlers. It’s also safe for women. It prevents the smoke entering their eyes and also stops the heat reaching your face. I teach them how to build the stove themselves. It makes us happy that they are learning to build it and then teaching others.”

www.heritagefoundationpak.org



Finalist (Special Mention)

Promoting local building cultures in Haiti Haiti

Co-ordinated by CRAterre, this project supported the post-disaster response after the 2010 earthquake in a way that reduces future risk to human life and dependency on external aid. The lack of national building standards and poor construction methods needed to be addressed urgently to cope with future natural disasters. By studying and then adapting local building practices; training Haitian construction professionals; and distributing educational materials, CRAterre promoted safer, more effective and locally sustainable building techniques.

Antoine Jean-Baptise, who helped with the construction of her new house, said: "I provided stones, sand and water to the craftsmen. I'm proud of myself for participating and grateful to those who helped us. I am happy to know that the local builders are ready in case of a natural disaster and they're building more resilient houses now, due to the training received."

www.craterre.org



Finalist (Special Mention)

Startblok – Bringing young people and refugees together through housing Netherlands

This experimental housing project using old shipping containers located on disused land in Amsterdam is home to 565 people aged between 18 and 27. Half of the residents are refugees who have been granted residence permits and the other half are young Dutch citizens in need of affordable housing. The community is managed by the residents themselves, who are provided with support and counselling. Dutch residents are able to work or study in an otherwise expensive city, while refugees benefit from the opportunity to develop friendships and gain knowledge to help rebuild their lives.

Adrian, who came to Amsterdam in 2015 as an asylum seeker from Jamaica, said: “When I came here I was scared to talk to people because I’m gay and other persons didn’t understand that. I was kind of reserved and shy because of the same mentality that I had from being in Jamaica – you have to be what society expects of you. Here, they accept me for who I am and that’s the best part about living here.”

www.startblok.amsterdam



Finalist

Plastic bottle houses for Sahrawi refugees Algeria

This project was initiated by Tateh Lehbib Barika, an engineer born in the Sahrawi refugee camps in Algeria, home to thousands of people displaced by conflict in Western Sahara more than 40 years ago. After receiving a scholarship from the UNHCR to study renewable energy, Tateh returned to the camps with an innovative idea to build homes using recycled plastic bottles filled with sand. This community-led project demonstrated how readily and freely available materials could be used.

Resident Albatoul Mohammed said: “We feel very safe, and the house isn’t affected by the heavy rains or the heat, unlike adobe houses covered with zinc sheets. I’m very proud of this work and the idea that came from a refugee who saw how his people were suffering. It’s had a big impact on my life, not only in terms of the building itself but also the use of plastic bottles and waste that can’t be got rid of here in the camps.”

www.facebook.com/lehbib.tatah



Finalist

Crossroads participatory urban art projects International

This series of large-scale street art projects in marginalised communities around the world uses vibrant colours and bold design to empower, motivate and unite residents. They target urban neighbourhoods that have been stigmatised by issues like poverty and drugs, and give residents a positive new sense of ownership and identity by involving them in the painting of giant murals. Boa Mistura, a Madrid-based collective of artists, architects, designers and engineers with roots in graffiti art, is commissioned by local partners to carry out the projects.

The World Habitat Awards judging panel said: "Their work is visually stunning. Open spaces need defending – this project uses art and aesthetics to change the image and emphasis on the use of these spaces in cities."

www.boamistura.com



Finalist

'Model Street' – Making cities together Kenya

This initiative to improve the neighbourhood's streets in Dandora, the location of East Africa's largest informal landfill site, is changing the area's reputation for high crime and pollution to one of innovation and inspiration. It has transformed the physical appearance of a street in the 'Phase 2' neighbourhood with paving, painting, children's play areas and the planting of trees. Clearing drains and new rubbish bins have improved sanitation while better lighting has increased safety for residents and business owners.

Christine Ndinda, who has lived in the community for over 12 years with her children, said:

"The life I lived before the upgrade of this street was just bad. No other word can come to describe how dangerous this street was and for years I lacked hope and envied other neighbourhoods. Now with a cleaner, safer and colourful street I cannot imagine living anywhere else in Nairobi. I love what this neighbourhood has become."

www.kuwa.co.ke



Finalist

EarthEnable

Rwanda and Uganda

This social enterprise is supporting families in Rwanda and Uganda to replace their dirt floor with solid earthen floors. Dirt floors harbour parasites and bacteria which can cause serious conditions, including diarrhoea, parasitic infections, respiratory illness, anaemia, immunodeficiency and malnutrition. These floors are laid by trained masons and have a durable, waterproof surface which can be washed to remove dirt and dust. They are more affordable than concrete and significantly more environmentally friendly.

Eugenie Mukaneza, a farmer and mother of three children, said: “Before, we had a dirt floor and our clothes were full of dust. But now my house is clean. Children at school used to laugh at my children because their school uniforms were covered with dust. Sometimes, my children would miss school because they were afraid to be laughed at. Now, my children do not miss school anymore. They go to school clean and other children do not laugh at them anymore.”

www.earthenable.org



Finalist

'Warm Comfort' and energy-saving micro-loans Tajikistan

This micro-loan organisation, working with a co-operative to produce energy saving products for homes in Tajikistan, is helping to tackle poverty in the remote mountainous Gorno-Badakhshan region. The scheme protects residents from the cold by issuing small loans to pay for energy-saving home improvements. It improves customers' health and wellbeing and provides much-needed work for more than 70 carpenters. It also helps protect the environment by drastically reducing the need for firewood.

Resident Shukrihudoev Komil said: "The windows we had before let heat out because they had a lot of flaws. Heating our home consumed a lot of fuel. Fortunately, we received a short-term loan with low interest. We were then able to purchase windows and doors, which are made with new technology. They keep the heat in the house for a long time. Our fuel consumption has decreased significantly."

mfo.madina.tj



Finalist

Praxis and Commonweal – no recourse to public funds housing United Kingdom

This project, run by human rights organisation Praxis Community Projects in partnership with the charity Commonweal Housing, helps single women and migrant families with children who are at risk of exploitation and homelessness. Many become destitute during the asylum process or because they have other problems with their immigration status and they are not permitted to work or receive financial support in the form of welfare benefits or mainstream housing provision. This project provides safe, free accommodation and access to free immigration advice and support.

Rosie*, who was referred to Praxis when she was almost seven months pregnant, said: "I was sleeping on the floor of a shop whose staff would let me in before they locked up at night and would let me out when they opened up in the morning. Praxis met me for an assessment and gave me somewhere to stay that same day. Being in Praxis accommodation gave me some physical comfort in a safe place at a time when I was struggling with pregnancy-related aches and pains, exacerbated by sleeping on a hard floor." **name has been changed*

www.praxis.org.uk



www.worldhabitatawards.org

