



PRESENTATION OF THE WORLD HABITAT AWARDS

WORLD HABITAT DAY 2009
WASHINGTON D.C., UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



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Prepared by BSHF

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Contents

06	A World Habitat Day Message Mr Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary-General, United Nations
08	Planning our Urban Future Mrs Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director, UN-HABITAT
10	The World Habitat Awards Mrs Diane Diacon, Director, Building and Social Housing Foundation
14	World Habitat Award 2009 Winning Projects Caprichando a Morada: Living well is part of human dignity, Brazil Building Partnerships to Eradicate Poverty, Poland
22	2009 Habitat Scroll of Honour Awards
24	World Habitat Award 2009 Finalists
29	Sources of Further Information
30	World Habitat Awards 2010/2011: An Invitation to Enter

The 2009 World Habitat Awards for innovative and sustainable housing solutions were presented at the global celebration of World Habitat Day in Washington D.C., United States of America on Monday 5th October 2009.

World Habitat Day is organised each year on the first Monday of October by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), providing a unique opportunity to focus attention on the importance of shelter in people’s lives and the world’s collective responsibility for the future of human habitat.

This year’s global celebration was hosted by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development in collaboration with UN-HABITAT and in partnership with the Rockefeller Foundation. Celebrations took place throughout the United States and in over 50 countries around the world.

The theme for 2009 was Planning our Urban Future, chosen by UN-HABITAT in order to raise awareness of the need to improve urban planning to deal with new major challenges of the 21st century.



The theme of this year's observance of World Habitat Day, Planning our Urban Future, is meant to underscore the urgency of meeting the needs of city dwellers in a rapidly urbanizing world.

The major urban challenges of the twenty-first century include the rapid growth of many cities and the decline of others, the expansion of the informal sector, and the role of cities in causing or mitigating climate change. Evidence from around the world suggests that governments at all levels are largely failing to address these challenges. Urban sprawl and unplanned development are among the most visible consequences. Hundreds of millions of urban dwellers are also increasingly vulnerable to rising sea levels, coastal flooding and other climate-related hazards.

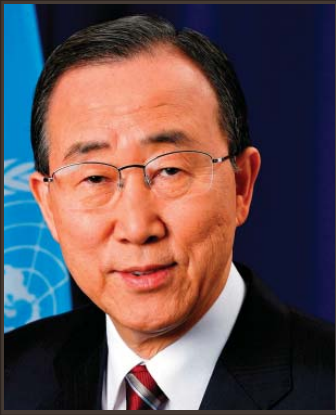
A troubling trend has emerged in many cities in developed and developing countries alike: the growth of up-market suburban areas and gated communities, on the one hand, and the simultaneous increase in overcrowded tenement zones, ethnic enclaves, slums and informal settlements, on the other. Stark contrasts have also emerged between technologically advanced and well-served business sectors, and other areas defined by declining industry, sweatshops and informal businesses.

Better, more equitable urban planning is essential. New ideas from smart cities around the world are pointing the way toward sustainable urbanization. But there is far more to do. The urban poor need improved tenure and access to land. All cities need safer and more environmentally friendly public transport, housing security, clinics and public services. There is also a need to mobilize financing for urban development.

Planning is at the heart of this agenda. But planning will work only where there is good urban governance and where the urban poor are brought into the decisions that affect their lives. And planning will work best only where corruption is honestly tackled. United Nations bodies such as UN-HABITAT can provide vital help with capacity building, research and knowledge management and exchange.

At the dawn of this new urban age, we recognise the problems and we know how to tackle them. We understand perhaps more clearly than ever before that no-one can be excluded, especially the poor.

▲ Washington D.C., host of the global celebration of World Habitat Day



▲ Mr Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary-General, United Nations

On World Habitat Day, let us pledge to do our part to follow through on our plans for a better, greener, more sustainable future for our increasingly urban planet.



We have chosen the theme, Planning our Urban Future, for World Habitat Day 2009 for a simple but very important reason: In many parts of our world urban planning systems have changed very little. Indeed, they are often contributors to urban problems rather than tools for human and environmental improvement.

It is clear to us at UN-HABITAT and to our partners in government, municipalities, and at community level that current approaches to planning must change and that a new role for planning in sustainable urban development has to be found.

It is a fact that slums are the worst manifestations of urban poverty, deprivation, and exclusion in the modern world. And it is a fact that today we have the technological know-how, the power, and the money to plan effectively for the targets established in the Millennium Declaration.

Many of the ills of urbanisation have been conveniently left at the doorstep of urban planners and planning. However, in many countries planning has not been very powerful and developers, the private sector and individual citizens are relatively unconstrained in their activities. Powerful economic interests may feel threatened by planning recommendations. Politicians may not have an adequate sense of the public interest or plans may not reflect their priorities. Alternatively, planners may not have adequate training and their advice may be good or bad, taken or ignored. Plans may be unrealistic, given their resource requirements. Plans may not reflect the priorities of community groups. On top of all this, the implementation authority may be fragmented among jurisdictions.

In trying to correct these deficiencies, planning has opened itself to public participation and preference and to taking a more realistic view of the limits of the possible, while factoring in the resources likely to be available for implementation.

Yet, in today's world, despite many success stories that have come about due to planning's ability to reinvent itself, it would appear that the planning function still falls short in some parts of the world. Slums are multiplying, urban crime is rampant, development keeps sprawling, transport efficiency is declining, energy costs are rising, and health problems are increasing, while many citizens are walling themselves off from others. What's happening here? Has planning failed and does it need to be replaced by a more effective function?

Actually, there is no replacement for planning. It is a function that results from our uniquely human ability to anticipate consequences. As the world grows more and more urban, it is vital that, as governments accept urbanisation as a positive trend, planning fulfils its proper role in guiding urban development when it comes to improving access to services, and economic and social opportunities.

Urban planning will therefore have to continue to adapt so it is able to carry out its much-required effective role in shaping a positive urban future.

▲ Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



▲ Mrs Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director, UN-HABITAT

The annual World Habitat Award competition was established in 1985 by the Building and Social Housing Foundation (BSHF) to identify innovative and sustainable housing solutions worldwide. BSHF also works to ensure that the approaches developed in the winning projects are widely shared, by organising study visits, as well as publishing and disseminating a range of information.

The two winning projects this year are concerned to help those on low incomes improve their housing situation, as well as establishing sustainable ways of earning a living.

The COOPERHAF rural housing cooperative was established to address the critical housing needs of very low-income agricultural families in Brazil and uses a participatory approach to mobilise and organise families and help them build, improve or expand their homes. It has worked with over 30,000 low-income families to date.

The Barka Foundation for Mutual Help works with destitute and homeless people in Poland as well as other European cities. Using its philosophy of encouraging mutual self-help, it now provides homes for 750 persons and has assisted over 50,000 people in the last ten years through its various housing, education and vocational training programmes.

The lessons from both of these projects have been transferred, both nationally and internationally, and details are set out on the following pages.

Mrs Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director of UN-HABITAT presented an award of £10,000 and a World Habitat Award trophy to each of the two winners.

The World Habitat Award trophies are predominantly crafted in solid silver and contain the symbol, in some form, of the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless.

This year's sterling silver trophies have been designed by Mrs Zoe Youngman and Ms Kate Thorley, designers at the Jewellery Industry Innovation Centre of the University of Central England, Birmingham, United Kingdom and crafted by Mr Andrew Macgowan.

Trophy designed by Mrs Kate Thorley and Ms Zoe Youngman and crafted by Mr Andrew Macgowan. Photo by Ms Hilary Shedel.



▲ Mrs Diane Diacon, Director, Building and Social Housing Foundation





▲ Mr Tomasz Sadowski and Mrs Barbara Sadowska receive the World Habitat Award trophy from Mrs Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director of UN-HABITAT at the global celebration of World Habitat Day in Washington D.C., United States of America, on behalf of the Barka Foundation for Mutual Help, Poland.



Sr. Celso Ludwig receives the World Habitat Award trophy from Mrs Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director of UN-HABITAT at the global celebration of World Habitat Day in Washington D.C., United States of America, on behalf of COOPERHAF, Brazil.

Trophy designed by Mrs Kate Thorley and Ms Zoe Youngman and crafted by Mr Andrew Macgowan.



Caprichando a Morada: Living well is part of human dignity

Brazil

The COOPERHAF rural housing cooperative was established in 2001 by the Workers' Federation in Family-Based Agriculture to address the critical housing needs of very low-income farming families in Brazil. A participatory approach is used to mobilise and organise families and help them build, improve or expand their homes. The project also focuses on creating sustainable livelihoods through capacity building, forming cooperatives and diversifying agricultural production thereby increasing income generation opportunities and ensuring food security.

The housing shortage in rural areas of Brazil affects more than 1.7 million farmers and rural workers, many of whom live in precarious, high-risk and often overcrowded conditions without access to basic services. Formerly landless rural workers receiving land through the agrarian reform process are particularly vulnerable and often do not have access to safe drinking water or suitable sanitation facilities, resulting in improper waste disposal.

The shortage of adequate housing in rural areas has meant that many young couples must choose

between living with their parents and migrating to the cities, threatening the long term sustainability of family farming.

The project was originally established in three of Brazil's southern states and has expanded to cover 12 of the country's 26 states. Over 30,000 low-income families have accessed programmes that improve housing conditions and help develop sustainable livelihoods through COOPERHAF.

Rural housing cooperatives

This community-led and managed programme works with very low-income families, 98 per cent of whom would not previously have been able to afford to build, improve or extend their homes. The various housing types have been designed with the participation of the farmers according to their budgetary and design needs.

Residents are involved at various stages of the process, from selecting and adapting housing types and choosing a mason, to taking part in the construction of their own homes, with technical assistance from COOPERHAF, as well

as planning the development of their land. Throughout the process, residents take part in a series of workshops on themes including construction methods for rural housing, social rights, organisation and cooperativism, social division of work, farm diversification (planting of fruit orchards, medicinal plant and vegetable gardens) and household organisation. With an increasing focus on environmental issues, COOPERHAF began in 2007 to train its technical and construction teams in agro-ecology and the use of sustainable building materials and technologies.

A key aim of the programme, in addition to improving housing conditions, is to help support livelihoods and generate income for small independent and family farmers. Examples include support and training for the formation of agricultural production cooperatives (e.g. milk cooperatives) and agro-ecology collectives, as well as marketing and commercialisation of agricultural products. Diversification is encouraged to reduce seasonal income variability and ensure food security.

The programme also addresses issues of social inclusion: enhancing the role of women in management, generating opportunities for young people in rural areas and incorporating the wisdom of the older generation in the improvement of living conditions. Through the project, women in particular have been empowered to actively participate in community assemblies and decision-making processes – areas in which previously they did not have a voice.

Covering costs

Funding for the project has been obtained from a range of national and state government housing programmes. Funding provided through subsidies ranges from US\$640 per household for housing improvement and extension to US\$2,560 per household for new housing construction, and requires a counterpart contribution from families that varies between US\$640 and US\$2,135 depending on the programme and size of the home. For families who cannot afford the counterpart contribution, ethical lenders such as Cresol Central and some state government



agencies are able to provide additional support in the form of low-interest loans or grants. The total cost per unit (for new construction) therefore varies between US\$3,200 and US\$4,696 and covers building materials and labour, as well as technical assistance. Families contribute their labour as well as the counterpart, which can be paid through residents' own savings, loans from banks such as Cresol Central or grants received from different agencies.

The Ministry of Labour and Employment provided funding for capacity building of COOPERHAF staff, masons, municipal coordinators and a women's collective. The Ministry of Agrarian Development has provided a total of US\$99,525 in funding to cover the costs and materials of the workshops carried out with the small farmers.

Prior to 2006, each associate/household paid a one-off fee of US\$45 to become a member of the cooperative and be included in the project. This allowed the cooperative to hire technical and social professionals and covered the costs of printed materials and other expenses. Since 2006,

these costs are covered by the current federal government housing programmes and associates must now pay a fee of only US\$2 to join.

Empowering local leaders

The communities lead and manage the implementation of the programme, with a municipal coordinator working alongside the families in each municipality. Construction work is carried out by the families themselves through self-build with the help of a mason and technical assistance provided by COOPERHAF's multidisciplinary team. Approximately 60 per cent of projects to date have been new construction and 40 per cent refurbishment, varying from region to region according to existing housing conditions.

Spaces for sharing and discussing ideas and experiences have been created through the workshops, meetings and assemblies carried out as part of the programme. Particularly in the south of the country, there is a tradition of hospitality and solidarity amongst neighbours and the programme has both strengthened existing social networks and created new ones.

Transfer and scaling up

Affiliate offices have been set up in each of the states the project works in. Each employs a small team of local professionals as well as local leaders who work as municipal coordinators to organise the training activities and carry out the ongoing management. This local knowledge helps ensure that the approach is adapted to each state's specific circumstances, for example available local materials, existing funding schemes at municipal and state levels and climate.

Empowering the local leaders has proven to be a very successful strategy and enables regional federations, trade unions and their communities to carry out the housing programmes themselves.

A special replication unit has been set up within the headquarters of COOPERHAF that works with the local leaders to ensure that the approach is adapted to address the different economic, social, environmental, cultural and political conditions where the transfer is taking place. A recent agreement signed with the Special Secretariat for Aquiculture and Fishing will see the COOPERHAF



experience transferred to 260 fishing families in the south of Brazil. Further transfer will be carried out in partnership with a community of indigenous families, and with communities of 'quilombolas' (descendants of African slaves).

The work of COOPERHAF began in 2001 with one project for 357 families and has gradually expanded. To date, 30,000 low-income families have benefitted from the programme and COOPERHAF has influenced Brazilian housing policy, ensuring the inclusion of rural families in the National Housing Policy of the Ministry of Cities.

For further details of COOPERHAF, please see the contact details on page 29 or visit the World Habitat Awards website at www.worldhabitatawards.org



Building Partnerships to Eradicate Poverty

Poland

The Barka Foundation for Mutual Help was established in 1989 to help support the many destitute and homeless people in Poland after the collapse of the Communist system. Using its philosophy of encouraging mutual self-help, it now provides homes for 750 persons and has assisted over 50,000 people in the last ten years through its various housing, education and vocational training programmes.

It has created 25 income-generating enterprises to date, as well as restoring two redundant state farms and pioneering organic agriculture. Partnership working with local municipalities and businesses has created sustainable employment opportunities and the various activities undertaken by Barka have had a major influence in facilitating the emergence of civil society and social enterprise in post-Communist Poland. Barka is increasingly being asked to work in large European cities, helping destitute East European migrant workers, either to return home or settle into their new society.

With the breakdown of the Communist system in the late 1980s, many individuals were unable to cope with the more independent form of

living required. This led to alcoholism, extreme poverty and acute social vulnerability and many found themselves homeless, often having to live on the streets. At the same time the collapse of the collective farming system saw large-scale dereliction in the rural areas of Poland, with many thousands of hectares of land, as well as farm buildings, abandoned and neglected. Homelessness and a desperate shortage of dwellings are the main housing problems faced in Poland today.

Providing a home and support to the socially excluded

Barka works to assist the socially vulnerable as well as migrant workers returning to Poland who find themselves without anywhere to live. There are currently 30 Barka communities established throughout south-west Poland, offering accommodation in hostels, private flats and one-family houses, all of which are run as extended family homes rather than institutions.

Some of the residents spend only a year or so with Barka, typically while they are being treated for alcohol addiction; those who have deeper-seated problems prefer to continue living and

working in the community. Physical and mental health has improved for those living in Barka Foundation homes, through the mutual self-help philosophy. The combination of hard work and human interaction has proved for many individuals to be a miraculous recovery from addictions and many residents go on to marry, raise children and lead productive lives. Those who are too old and frail to work are supported by the communities.

All residents are involved with the decision making in their communities and each community is economically self-sufficient, through the various activities carried out by the residents. Those who have a steady income pay rent; those who do not earn an income contribute their labour.

Property and partnerships

In 1997, the Barka Foundation purchased and restored a manor house for use as a cooperation centre for the exchange of experiences among European organisations working with the poorest people in society. In 1999, a further 400 ha of land with the old farm buildings of a former state farm complex were rented. The buildings

were partly restored using local volunteer labour and provide 24 apartments. The land is farmed organically, with biodiversity encouraged through the re-establishment of ancient pig breeds and fruit trees.

In 2002, the programme for accessible housing was started with the development of the Darzybour Settlement in partnership with the local and national government. This has provided 32 apartments to date and has been widely copied by other local authorities throughout Poland.

Abandoned dwellings and blocks of apartments acquired by Barka are typically in very poor condition, lacking floors, sewerage, electricity, insulation and water tight roofs. These are renovated and brought back into a condition that is fit for human habitation. Local materials and labour are used wherever possible in order to provide low-cost and environmentally friendly accommodation.

An important component of the project is the creation of partnerships within local communities to help develop greater awareness and opportunities for Barka residents. To date, 18



such partnerships have been established and the national government is funding the development of a further 100 partnerships in the poorest communities in Poland over the next four years. Barka's network of private business, educational institutions, housing companies, local authorities representatives, social partners and churches have all been involved in the development of new projects.

Training and social enterprise

Many of those coming to live in the communities have very low educational levels and few skills. Barka provides a range of programmes to bring these long-term unemployed people into the job market, including:

- Fourteen vocational training centres which train Barka residents in a range of skills, including construction and agriculture.
- The Barka Centre of Social Integration in Poznan delivers educational programmes to 200 vulnerable people annually.
- Training for potential Polish entrepreneurs is provided in collaboration with other countries (Scotland, Italy, Belgium and Finland) in

order for people to learn about new techniques, standards, management, organisation, marketing and financial support.

- Barka works with local communities facing poverty, helping to set up social cooperatives to generate an income. The Centre of Social Economy establishes ten social cooperatives and 100 new work places annually.

A Barka school using the Danish Kofoed system of linking social help for the poorest with education was opened in 2004 and is now funded by the national government as one of the eight Centres for Social Integration, providing social and vocational reintegration for 250 persons a day. It has served as a model for the creation of similar centres in Poland and abroad and currently has a waiting list of over 800 persons. Crisis centres are run in winters for those on the street.

Barka has played an instrumental role in bringing four key pieces of national legislation into being that not only support the development of civil society and social enterprise in Poland, but also address problems of social exclusion and provide financial support for social housing organisations in the country.



Covering costs

Twenty-five per cent of Barka's annual income is generated by a diverse range of self-supporting social enterprise activities. These include second-hand shops and furniture renovation, recycling, provision of security for buildings and parking facilities, hairdressing and beauty therapy, organic farming and catering services. Metal recycling currently employs 50 people.

Other current sources of income include the European Social Fund, local municipalities and the Velux Foundation. The costs of renovation and restoring accommodation have been met by local municipalities and the Polish Ministry of Housing.

A range of grant-making organisations have been involved with the development of the programme over the last 18 years, including UNDP, the Cooperative Netherlands Foundation, the Henry Ford Award for People and the Environment and hundreds of small private donations of goods, tools, materials etc.

Transfer

Since 2002, Barka has worked with the European Network of Migrants Integration Programme for the social integration of Polish migrants and local communities. This has been implemented to date in London, Dublin and Copenhagen. Currently 500 people benefit from this programme annually. It is anticipated that this will be extended to other London boroughs and European capitals by 2011.

Barka works in partnership with other international organizations under the EU-funded PROGRESS Programme 2008–2009, promoting one stop mobility shops and social enterprises and cooperatives as well as working on good practices in Europe in the education of rejected groups of people (ex-prisoners, persons with addictions, homeless and other vulnerable people).

For further details of the Barka Foundation for Mutual Help, please see the contact details on page 29 or visit the World Habitat Awards website at www.worldhabitatawards.org

2009 Habitat Scroll of Honour Awards

The Habitat Scroll of Honour Award was launched by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) in 1989. The aim of this prestigious human settlements award is to acknowledge individuals and institutions which have made outstanding contributions in various fields such as shelter provision, highlighting the plight of the homeless, leadership in post-conflict reconstruction, and developing and improving human settlements and the quality of urban life.



▲ Presentation to Ugandan Women's Efforts to Save Children, Uganda

Presented by UN-HABITAT Executive Director, Mrs Anna Tibaijuka, and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary, Mr Shaun Donovan, the 2009 Habitat Scrolls of Honour were awarded to:

Peter Oberlander (Canada)

A founding father of UN-HABITAT - for a lifetime of promoting the urban agenda around the world, (awarded posthumously).

Un Techo para mi País (Chile)

For providing over 42,000 homes for the poor in 15 Latin American countries.

Rizhao Municipal Government (China)

For transforming their city into a green home with new housing and infrastructure.

Cementos Mexicanos - CEMEX (Mexico)

For helping more than one million poor people build their own homes.

The City of Grozny (Russia)

For resurrecting their war-scarred city and providing new homes for thousands of people.



▲ Presentation to Jan Peterson, United States of America

Al-Medina Al-Munawarah Local Urban Observatory (Saudi Arabia)

For pioneering a Local Observatory System now used elsewhere in the country and in the Middle East for smart urban planning.

The Alexandra Renewal Project (South Africa)

For helping thousands of poor people move into better homes and boosting health, water and electricity services.

The City of Malmö (Sweden)

For its innovative, holistic approach to becoming a 21st century eco-city.

Ugandan Women's Efforts to Save Children (Uganda)

For providing water, health and sanitation to orphans and vulnerable children.

Jan Peterson (United States of America)

For championing the rights of grassroots women and their movements for better human settlements.

Neal Peirce (United States of America)

For a lifetime of journalism dedicated to reporting cities for a better urban future.

World Habitat Award 2009 Finalists



Technological Transfer Processes for Popular Habitat
Argentina

AVE/CEVE is an NGO dedicated to research, technological development, transfer and training in the field of low-cost housing. Key features of AVE/CEVE's work include the participatory development of 'hard' technologies, including integral building systems and sustainable building components, and 'soft' technologies such as tools for community organisation, housing finance and self-management.

To date 5,475 homes have been built or improved using the technologies, management and financial systems developed. AVE/CEVE's approaches have been widely transferred throughout Latin America, benefiting approximately 140 NGOs, grassroots community groups and governments in the region.



Sint Antoniuspleintje
Belgium

Sint Antoniuspleintje (St. Anthony's Square) is an environmentally sustainable housing project developed by Zonnige Kempen, a pioneering social housing provider in Belgium.

The project is located in the village of Zoerle Parwijs where 13 highly energy efficient socially rented homes have been constructed, thereby increasing the supply of locally available affordable housing in the rural area, as well as helping to reduce the fuel poverty experienced by those on low incomes. One of the innovative approaches used in this project is a solar asphalt collector, which harnesses the heat of the road surface in summer and stores it for use in the colder parts of the year. Residents actively monitor their energy consumption and are well informed about how to maximise their homes' energy saving potential.



Water Solutions through Collective Management
Bolivia

This project works to extend access to affordable water in peri-urban areas of Cochabamba, Bolivia through an innovative public-private-community partnership. Initiated in 2003 by Bolivian NGO Fundación Pro Hábitat, the project involves the community-managed supply and distribution of potable water in one of the poorest areas of the city.

Water committees with democratically elected members have been established within each community to manage the water systems. A revolving fund has been established to enable residents to access micro-credit loans and all project costs are met by the local communities themselves. To date, the project has benefitted 1,709 families from eight different communities in the South Zone of Cochabamba.



Earth Roofs for the Sahel
Burkina Faso

Initiated by the Association la Voute Nubienne (AVN) in 2000, this programme has trained over 115 masons drawn from local communities in the construction of vaulted earth brick houses. The building technique is an ancient Nubian one, adapted and simplified for the rural Sahel region of Africa. Further support from AVN helps the masons become independent entrepreneurs, developing their own clients and creating income generating opportunities in a region where few exist.

The houses offer significant improvements in safety, thermal comfort and affordability and increasing demand is seeing a self-sustaining market develop. The programme is currently training 170 apprentice masons and is now working in Mali, Senegal, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea.



A New Financing Paradigm for Affordable Home Ownership
 Canada

Established in 1998, Home Ownership Alternatives (HOA) is a non-profit financial corporation operating in Greater Toronto which finances the development of affordable ownership housing. It uses a range of innovative financial mechanisms, including shared appreciation second mortgages, to enable low and moderate income families become home owners.

Working with development partners, HOA has supported 11 housing developments providing 2,350 homes to date in the form of apartments, duplexes and townhouses. These homes are more affordable for the families who fall in the gap between being eligible for social housing and being able to afford conventional home ownership.



Technical Team Planning for Self-Help Housing in the Kambi Moto Community
 Kenya

This programme is working to enable the 270 households of the Kambi Moto informal settlement to gain security of tenure and to design and construct their own homes, whilst simultaneously developing their skills in procurement and project management. As these tasks are adopted by community members, future reliance on professional input will be minimised.

Through negotiation with the city council the land has been transferred to the community as a whole, with each and every household receiving sectional title for an equal-sized plot. A collaborative design process has produced a design organised over three floors that could be built incrementally over time and is connected to water, sanitation and electricity services.



Earthsong Eco-Neighbourhood
 New Zealand

Earthsong Eco-Neighbourhood is the first cohousing community in New Zealand and combines environmentally sustainable approaches to housing and lifestyle with well established community decision-making processes. The 32 households, made up of residents of all ages and a range of ethnic groups and economic circumstances, each have a self-contained home and also own and share extensive communal facilities with the community as a whole. Twice weekly communal meals, the vegetable garden, shared childcare and carpooling foster an atmosphere of respect and cooperation.

Earthsong is an active member of its surrounding community and works in partnership with the local and national government to demonstrate the practical application of sustainable design principles.



Social Housing in Supportive Environments
 Serbia

The Housing Center is an NGO working to improve the housing conditions for socially vulnerable groups in Serbia, particularly refugees and internally displaced persons.

Not only does the Housing Center construct new social housing units, it also helps to create a supportive environment for residents through the provision of a 'host family' in each of the small apartment blocks. The host family helps with the development of good neighbourly relations, as well as establishing contacts with external bodies and helping to provide a sense of security. The project is delivered in close cooperation with local municipalities and their centres for social work. To date 430 new apartments have been completed in 22 municipalities and the project's approach is now being implemented ever more widely.



ecoMOD Project
 United States of America

This design / build / evaluate project based at the University of Virginia enables students from a variety of disciplines to gain hands-on, real-world experience by working in collaboration with social housing providers to deliver innovative, environmentally sustainable prefabricated housing for low-income households.

Currently in its fourth cycle, over 300 students have participated in the programme working closely with industry professionals to design and build five near-zero energy homes. Many former students now hold key positions in organisations working to deliver housing that is both affordable and sustainable. Work is underway to take ecoMOD designs into production and thus make low-cost and sustainable housing options, with reduced operating costs, available to conventional housing providers.

Sources of Further Information

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Caprichando a Morada: Living well is part of human dignity

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World Habitat Awards 2010/2011

An invitation to enter

The World Habitat Awards were established in 1985 by the Building and Social Housing Foundation as part of its contribution to the United Nations International Year of Shelter for the Homeless.

Two awards are given annually to projects that provide practical and innovative solutions to current housing needs and problems in countries of the global South as well as the North.

Every year an award of £10,000 is presented to each of the two winners at the annual United Nations global celebration of World Habitat Day.

CRITERIA FOR SUBMISSION

Projects are sought that:

- Demonstrate practical, innovative and sustainable solutions to current housing issues faced by countries of the global South as well as the North.
- Can be transferred or adapted for use as appropriate.
- View the term habitat from a broad perspective and bring other benefits as well, such as energy or water saving, income generation, social inclusion, community and individual empowerment, capacity building or education.

ENTRY PROCEDURE

The World Habitat Awards competition has a two-stage entry process:

Stage I submissions need only comprise a concise summary of all aspects of the project. From these preliminary submissions, twelve projects are selected by an assessment committee to go forward to Stage II of the competition.

Stage II submissions are evaluated by an independent advisory group before being put to a panel of international judges. Evaluation visits will be carried out to some of the projects prior to the final judging.

For further information and an online application form please visit

www.worldhabitatawards.org

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