



# World Habitat Awards

## 2013 Winners and Finalists



The Building and Social Housing Foundation (BSHF) is delighted to announce the two winners of the 2103 World Habitat Awards for innovative and sustainable housing solutions:

### **Hebron Old City Rehabilitation Programme | Palestine**

### **The 100,000 Homes Campaign | USA**

This special edition newsletter provides details of the two winning projects and ten finalists in the 2013 competition.

The 2013 Awards were presented in Medellín, Colombia in April 2014 at the World Urban Forum, organised by UN-Habitat.



### **Hebron Old City Rehabilitation Programme | Palestine**



### **The 100,000 Homes Campaign | USA**

Contact details and further information on each of the winning projects and finalists is available on the database of housing projects at [www.worldhabitatawards.org](http://www.worldhabitatawards.org).



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## Hebron Old City Rehabilitation Programme

Palestine

**Restoration and reuse of historic buildings in Hebron's Old City for housing purposes, regenerating urban infrastructure, reversing depopulation and supporting local economic development.**



The Hebron Rehabilitation Committee (HRC) is a semi-governmental organisation located within the Old City, in an area which is currently under Israeli military control. The main components of the project include the securing of decent housing, infrastructure and services, the stimulation of economic activity, and the provision of legal assistance to protect the residents' rights.

Hebron's historic centre is characterised by the density of its architectural fabric, narrow, winding streets and stone masonry structures of significant heritage value. Following the Israeli occupation of the Old City in 1967, the area was progressively abandoned and over time the physical condition of the city's old buildings had badly deteriorated.

Through a sensitive rehabilitation and restoration process using traditional techniques and materials, over 1,000 housing units have been renovated and are now inhabited by approximately 6,000 people. Large residential properties originally built to accommodate extended families of 20 or more people have been converted into smaller apartments to adapt to current cultural and household requirements. Local residents are employed and locally produced materials are used wherever possible.

The programme has increasingly focussed its work on reviving local economic activity and creating jobs in and around the Old City in an effort to reduce poverty and unemployment. Shops have been restored and various activities have been organised to encourage tourism. A vocational training school was established in 2009 in partnership with the Spanish government.

The project combines heritage preservation with job creation and the provision of high-quality affordable housing for low-income families in central areas, making use of existing infrastructure. Whilst the programme relies on national and international grant funding for its operations, partnerships and funding arrangements with a wide range of organisations help to reduce the reliance on a single funding stream. The programme has been running successfully for 17 years and funding is in place for on-going activities.

## The 100,000 Homes Campaign

United States of America

**Building a national grassroots movement with the purpose of finding and permanently housing 100,000 of the most long-term and vulnerable people experiencing homelessness across the USA.**



The 100,000 Homes Campaign is part of the strategy of the NGO Community Solutions (CS) to end homelessness in the USA, advocating and transferring the proven 'Street to Home' method pioneered in New York to communities elsewhere. The campaign started in July 2010 and is on track to find homes for 100,000 homeless people before it is scheduled to end in July 2014.

Around 650,000 people are homeless in the USA on any given night and from 1.5 to 2 million over the course of the year. For most, homelessness is short-term but for roughly 100,000 it becomes chronic. They have complex needs that prolong homelessness and make them dependent on costly government services that fail to deliver lasting or cost effective results.

Long-term homelessness seriously affects health; the average lifespan of a chronically homeless person is 25 years less than that of the average American.

During a Registry Week hundreds of volunteers canvas the streets between 04.00am and 06.00am for three consecutive mornings to survey each person sleeping outside using the Vulnerability Index, a tool created by Community Solutions. This creates a by-name and by-photograph registry of all homeless persons, ranked by risk of premature mortality.

Previously, communities often provided housing on a first-come first-serve basis, rather than targeting those most in need. The campaign has enabled data-based dialogue between national leaders and grassroots leaders, partnering to identify solutions to chronic homelessness based on what actually works at local level.

The Campaign is funded from public and private sources. It is now building relationships with federal government partners to establish a fee for service arrangement that could expand its reach. When it ends, CS intends to continue to provide improvement and data management services at a modest fee. The Campaign is already demonstrating a series of cost-efficient solutions that could be suggested as alternatives to government.



## Community Management of Urban Infrastructure and Housing Improvements in Greater Buenos Aires

Argentina

**Long-term, community-led solutions to the habitat problems facing low-income neighbourhoods, improving housing conditions, empowering communities and connecting them to basic services.**



Since 2010, *Fundación Pro Vivienda Social* has been implementing the Community Development Plan in all the communities where it works, giving a holistic vision and an increasingly important role to residents in the development of their communities. Three strategies have been defined to carry out the Plan: community empowerment, design and implementation of innovative projects and promotion of pro-poor businesses, with five programmes including the Integral Gasification Project and the Young Builders Project.

By 2013, 16,000 families had participated in Neighbourhood Trust Funds, of which 4,500 had been connected to the natural gas network, having a positive impact on the health, quality of life and comfort for approximately 20,000 people in 18 neighbourhoods. 300 Community Developers had gained new skills, and 30 Young Builders had been trained.

## The Struggle for Housing in Central Areas

Brazil

**Working towards ensuring the right of low-income families living in inadequate, overcrowded conditions in the city of Santos to decent, affordable housing in central areas.**



The *Associação Cortiços do Centro, Condomínio Vanguarda* (ACC) is a grassroots organisation in the city of Santos where approximately 14,500 people live in precarious conditions in houses built in the late 19th and early 20th century for well-off families. The houses have fallen into disrepair and now house up to 24 families each in overcrowded conditions.

In 2007, the ACC obtained a 6,000m<sup>2</sup> plot of land in Santos city centre from the Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management and funding was approved for the construction of the first 113 housing units. Additional funding was secured in 2010 for the second phase of the project, involving the construction of an additional 68 units through a system of mutual aid and self-management of resources.

## Cooperative Programme for the Development of Urban Neighbourhoods

Cameroon

**Introducing cooperative housing solutions and participatory budgeting processes, working to influence, formulate and promote housing and urban development policy.**



Since 2006, ASSOAL has been working with the grassroots network *Réseau National des Habitants du Cameroun* (RNHC) to develop new ways to improve access to affordable housing. The targeted beneficiaries are poor communities across the country totalling approximately 250,000 people.

ASSOAL and the RNHC started a series of pilot interventions to demonstrate the validity of new approaches such as participatory budgeting and housing cooperatives. In 2008, 19 other participatory budgeting projects for neighbourhood improvement were rolled out. The participatory budgeting process has led to the prioritisation of infrastructure provision, social programmes and the building of housing units. To support these various initiatives, ASSOAL runs dissemination and knowledge-sharing activities.

## CCOC Beaver Barracks Development

Canada

**Increasing the supply of affordable rental housing in downtown Ottawa and showing that high performance energy-efficient buildings can be attractive, accessible, and affordable.**



Beaver Barracks is a large affordable and environmentally sustainable housing development located in Ottawa. For 15 years the site was unoccupied and had been an eyesore. Beaver Barracks Development innovatively integrates a mixed housing model with environmentally sustainable building design and operations. The development is mixed in terms of incomes – with market, below-market and deeply subsidised rents – as well as access requirements, age and household composition.

Tenants are actively involved and sign a Green Commitment Pledge to reduce their environmental impact through lifestyle and consumer choices. Fifteen per cent of all the apartments are reserved for tenants who benefit from additional daily living support. With 254 households including over 100 children, the development has helped reinvigorate the immediate neighbourhood.

## Milton Park Community

Canada

**Citizen mobilisation to protect residents from eviction and halt gentrification, preserving long-term affordability in central areas and building a cohesive and supportive community.**



Milton Park is one of the oldest and most characteristic neighbourhoods in Montreal but the lack of maintenance caused buildings to fall into disrepair. In the 1970s, the whole neighbourhood was targeted for regeneration which would gentrify it and make it unaffordable for the original residents. In response, the community mobilised to find a long-term solution and avoid evictions.

The buildings and land were bought and organised into a condominium structure governed by a Declaration of Co-Ownership involving 25 members made up of cooperatives and non-profit housing corporations. These regulations secured the tenancy for all residents, and created the largest renovated cooperative housing structure in North America. The protection of the demographic mix against gentrifying forces and the safeguarding of quality of life have all had a very positive effect.

## Renewable Energy for Farmers

People’s Republic of China

**Improving local living conditions and environment for low-income rural populations, building an integrated waste management system and ensuring access to a clean and renewable source of energy.**



In 2007, *Initiative Développement* initiated a project in China retrofitting rural farms with biodigesters which process human and animal waste. This process converts the decomposed matter to biogas and produces bio-slurry. Farmers can then use the biogas in the kitchen for cooking and lighting and the bio-slurry is either used directly in the fields as fertiliser or is further composted.

What sets this project apart from other biogas projects in China is that it also focuses on training and long-term maintenance of the biodigesters. Through the carbon offset scheme of the Gold Standard Foundation, the project has guaranteed funding until 2020 from carbon credit sales to ensure the maintenance and long term use of the biodigesters and continued training provision to households.

## 30 Years of Planning Continuity in Freiburg

Germany

**Integrated planning approach carried out over 30 years, leading to the development of Freiburg as a leading exemplar of sustainable living in a compact, car-lite city.**



Continuity of an integrated planning approach over the last 30 years has led to the development of Freiburg as a leading exemplar of sustainable living in a compact car-lite city. A key success factor in Freiburg’s approach has been its focus on citizen participation and active democracy, enabling it to engage a wide range of stakeholders in its radical urban planning approach.

The project itself involves the development of local government planning policies. Freiburg is very well known throughout Germany for its sustainable approaches, which have influenced both regional and national governments. Germany now has some of the strongest environmental protection policies in Europe. The Freiburg model has spread to cities in neighbouring countries, including Mulhouse in France and Basel in Switzerland, as well as further afield.

## Alliances for building capacities and options for the urban poor: experiences from urban Odisha

India

**Developing housing solutions and urban practices and policies that are inclusive of the poor, building partnerships and demonstrating the effectiveness of bottom-up, community-led approaches.**



The Odisha project benefits the bottom 30 per cent of the economic pyramid of city dwellers who live in informal settlements, focusing on the community-led development of model houses that are affordable and adapted to local needs, as a basis for negotiating with government actors.

The approach includes various methodologies such as the formation of savings and credit groups; community-led mapping, surveys and enumerations; exchange amongst communities; building model houses; advocating for alternative tenure options and building community infrastructure and access to services. In addition, it engages with the policy arena through various peer group exchanges, precedence-setting and knowledge-sharing activities, campaigns, partnership building, negotiations with the authorities and undertaking proposals initiated by the Mahila Milan federations of slum dwellers.

# About the World Habitat Awards

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. These awards are given annually to projects that provide practical and innovative solutions to current housing needs and problems. Every year an award of £10,000 is presented to each of the two winners at a UN-Habitat global event.

## Who can enter?

The competition is open to any individual, organisation or government agency that has an innovative and sustainable housing solution in any country of the world. More than one entry can be made by the same individual or organisation.

Housing projects & approaches are sought that:

- demonstrate practical, innovative and sustainable solutions to current housing issues faced by countries all around the world
- can be transferred or adapted for use as appropriate
- are already being implemented or are completed ie not at design stage or very early stages of development
- 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, health benefits, capacity building or education.

Previous entrants can resubmit in subsequent years providing that the initiative has been further developed in the intervening time period.

## Apply now

Initial submissions to the Awards need only comprise a concise description of the key aspects of the initiative, accompanied by images, and may be submitted in English, Spanish or French. Full details and an online form are available at [www.worldhabitatawards.org](http://www.worldhabitatawards.org)

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## Peer Exchange



As a follow-up to the World Habitat Awards, international peer exchange activities are carried out each year to the winning projects in order to encourage the dissemination of innovative housing practice around the world and to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and experience. Bursaries are made available by BSHF, enabling participants from a range of countries to attend.

For more information and details on peer exchange activities visit [www.worldhabitatawards.org](http://www.worldhabitatawards.org).