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Housing initiatives combating climate injustice and empowering communities win 2024 World Habitat Awards

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World Habitat, the international non-profit organisation working to provide decent homes for everyone, in partnership with UN-Habitat, has announced the winners of the prestigious World Habitat Awards 2024.

This year, the Awards go to eight outstanding projects that demonstrate innovative and transformative approaches to housing, from community-driven solutions to climate change adaptation.

The Gold winners each receive £10,000, join an exclusive winners' Network and collaborate with the World Habitat team on international development opportunities.



The Gold World Habitat Awards 2024 Winners are:

Housing Rights in Jakarta: Collective Action and Policy Advocacy

A remarkable project in Jakarta, Indonesia, involving a group of informal settlement (kampung) residents has won a Gold World Habitat Award for its inspiring story of community resilience and collective action. Despite facing the constant threat of forced evictions, kampung communities in partnership with grassroots organisations have successfully fought back and secured their right to housing. Their efforts have resulted in the prevention of evictions, the return of evicted families to their homes, and city-wide regulatory changes that safeguard all kampung residents from forced evictions.

Energiesprong: Revolutionizing Home Retrofitting

Energiesprong, a pioneering project from the Netherlands, has been awarded a Gold World Habitat Award for its revolutionary approach to deep net-zero retrofitting. This innovative system uses prefabricated insulated wall and roof panels along with a range of smart green technologies to achieve a remarkable 70-80% reduction in a building's energy consumption. Since its inception in 2011, Energiesprong has implemented over 10,000 projects, specifically in the area of social housing, across seven countries in Europe and North America.

Maimunah Mohd Sharif, UN-Habitat Executive Director and a final judge of the World Habitat Awards, said: "Both initiatives represent a strong innovative response to two overlapping challenges, including housing and climate change. Going beyond a vision of housing as four walls and a roof, they touch upon social justice, human rights and community empowerment. I would like to commend Housing Rights in Jakarta for its multi-organisational partnership and the involvement of the community from the start, as well as the decision to use both a policy and

political approach to drive strong change in the narrative towards the neighbourhood and its inhabitants. We also appreciate the development of a cooperative mechanism covering the land, to reduce speculation and strengthen tenure security.

“On the other hand, I applaud Energiesprong for its cost-effective, tenant-friendly approach to delivering deep, net zero housing retrofits. This programme stands out for its off-site manufacturing of insulated panels that are quickly installed on-site, which translates into minimal disruption to tenants. Importantly it addresses the potential risks posed by the energy transition, mitigating inequalities, housing loss and displacement.

“We would also like to commend the choice of two initiatives that are linking operational activities with advocacy efforts to produce long-lasting sustainable policy changes.”

Leilani Farha, Global Director of The Shift and a final judge of the World Habitat Awards, said: “Housing Rights in Jakarta is a fantastic project providing a space for residents at risk of eviction or who have been evicted to advocate for significant legal and political change. The project is firmly rooted in a rights approach with its focus on systemic change, community engagement and security of tenure. These are cornerstone aspects of the right to housing. I note that community engagement is often not effectively centred in housing work, so I was particularly impressed with this aspect of the project.

“In light of the climate emergency and the role of the built environment in it, retrofitting older buildings to be net zero is exactly the kind of activity the planet desperately needs and that low income tenants will benefit from (lower energy costs). Energiesprong has created a scalable solution that is sustainable, cost-effective and energy efficient. The model also has ensured minimal disruptions for tenants, making it a very practical solution that maintains security of tenure, particularly important for low-income households, who are the focus of this project. I note also that this project has the potential to be scalable.”

David Ireland, Chief Executive of World Habitat, said: “This year's Gold Award winners inspired us with their pioneering approaches to addressing the challenges of climate change and tenure insecurity, and we look forward to working with them this year.

“The Housing Rights in Jakarta project has managed to build the confidence of at-risk communities and equip them with the tools, knowledge and solidarity network they need to demand the housing rights they are entitled to.

“Energiesprong is a best-practice retrofit, which reaps the benefits of standardisation but is also flexible in product delivery. It offers social housing providers an innovative, fast and cost-effective solution for improving the energy efficiency of older buildings, which in turn benefits tenants financially and improves their quality of life.”

The Silver World Habitat Award 2024 Winners are:

Government of Chile Rural Habitability Programme: Improving Livelihoods in Remote Chilean Communities

The Chilean Government's Rural Habitability Programme has been recognised for its significant impact in addressing the critical housing needs of remote communities across the country. Since the programme began, it has improved the lives of over 40,000 people by building or renovating over 10,000 homes in remote Chilean communities.

La Ciguë: Affordable Student Housing in Geneva

La Ciguë, a student housing cooperative in Geneva, Switzerland, scooped the Award for its pioneering approach to providing affordable student housing. Since its inception in 1986, La Ciguë has been steadily expanding its portfolio, managing nearly 740 rooms in prime city centre locations and providing much-needed financial relief to students.

The Bronze World Habitat Award Winners are:

CO-HATY Emergency Housing Project: Shelter for Internally Displaced People in Ukraine

The CO-HATY emergency housing project in Ukraine has been recognised in this year's awards for its innovative approach to providing shelter for internally displaced people (IDPs). The project converts abandoned buildings into temporary accommodation for IDPs, offering a much-needed lifeline in a country grappling with the effects of an ongoing war and a severe shortage of affordable housing.

DARAJA Weather Forecasting Service: Saving Lives in Informal Settlements

The DARAJA weather forecasting and early warning service in Kenya and Tanzania receives the award for its innovative approach to preparing residents of informal settlements for extreme weather events. The service provides regular, reliable weather information and response actions in accessible formats, empowering communities to prepare for the growing incidents of extreme weather events caused by climate change.

Nettelbeckplatz: Sustainable, Affordable, and Accessible Housing in Berlin

Berlin's Nettelbeckplatz affordable housing estate received its award for its remarkable transformation from an ageing residential complex into a vibrant and sustainable community. The project has given the building a new lease of life, incorporating energy-efficient measures, improving accessibility, and attracting a diverse mix of residents.

New Ground Cohousing Community: A Supportive Environment for Older Adults

The UK's first cohousing community for women, New Ground, has been awarded a Bronze Award for its ground-breaking model of community living. This innovative approach provides a supportive environment for older adults, enabling them to thrive and age with dignity.