



Aga Khan Agency for Habitat

Aga Khan Agency for Habitat partners to design affordable, climate-resilient single-family homes



Geneva, Switzerland, 13 May 2019 - The Aga Khan Agency for Habitat (AKAH) partnered with the “Resilient Homes Design Challenge” in a crowdsourced challenge – spearheaded by the World Bank - to design climate-resilient single-family homes costing less than US\$ 10,000.

Over the last 10 years, natural disasters have caused 23 million people to become homeless – many of them poor. The challenge was in response to homelessness caused by natural disasters in low-income and disaster prone regions.

“The countries that fall in the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat’s remit have suffered 847 major disasters over the last 28 years, accounting for over 243,000 lives lost,” said Prince Hussain Aga Khan, Chairman of the Executive Committee for AKAH. “As all of us know, these disasters often cause families to lose their most valuable asset: their home. The Aga Khan Agency for Habitat was created specifically to find ways to deal with these increasing threats. Its mission is to find innovative ways to address the threat of natural disaster and work to make communities resilient, building on the decades of experience of various AKDN agencies.”

To address the increasing threat posed by natural disasters and climate change, the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat (AKAH) works to ensure that poor people live in physical settings that are as safe as possible from the effects of natural disasters, that residents who do live in high-risk areas are able to cope with disasters in terms of preparedness and response, and that these settings enable communities to thrive and lead a higher quality of life.

The home is a critical cornerstone to improve the quality of life of the communities that AKAH serves. His Highness the Aga Khan, speaking in an interview with Henri Weill, of *La Cohorte*, said, “when we studied the economic development of poor societies, we realised that when poor families manage to put money aside for the first time, they invest in their homes. Often it is a tin roof, running water or a sewerage system. In other words, human beings first look at everything that happens around them and their family. By working on people’s homes, we are working on basic needs and this then has an impact on several generations in the family.”

The design challenge arose when AKAH, as a member of a panel of judges at the World Bank, helped select the challenge team winners in partnership with Build Academy, the GFDRR, Airbnb and UN-Habitat. Over 3,225 professionals from over 160 countries participated in the challenge.

AKAH and the World Bank co-hosted a side-event at the annual [World Reconstruction Conference](#) (WRC4) in Geneva (13-14 May 2019) featuring the designs of the nine winners and three honorable mentions.

For more information, please see:

- [Build Academies/Resilient homes challenge](#)
- [World Reconstruction Conference 4](#)
- The Resilient Homes Design Challenge is supported by the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR, World Bank). <https://www.gfdr.org/en>

Read online: <https://www.akdn.org/press-release/aga-khan-agency-habitat-partners-design-affordable-climate-resilient-single-family>