



Media Release: From 26 November onwards

BETTER LIVING CHALLENGE ANNOUNCES ITS WINNERS!

Following a two week public exhibition and a strict voting process, The Better Living Challenge - a design competition showcasing green and affordable solutions to improve the homes of people living in low-income communities - has announced its winners.

The winning solutions and the designers behind them were celebrated at the inaugural Better Living Challenge Awards Ceremony, held on 25 November 2014 at the Cape Town City Hall.

Alan Winde, Western Cape Minister of Economic Opportunities, was the guest speaker at the event: "It was a great pleasure to announce the winners of the Better Living Challenge. These awards have been a collaborative effort between Western Cape Government's 110% Green initiative and the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. The awards play a pivotal role when it comes to the acknowledgement of those who have committed their careers to push for sustainable development and economic growth in our province."

Three overall winners were chosen from 21 Finalists, previously selected out of 130 original competition entries received across three entry categories. These 21 solutions were showcased in October and November at the V&A Waterfront and Cape Town Station Forecourt, where the finalists of the competition were judged. One overall winner was chosen in each of the three entry categories. These three winners are:

In the Structural Home category – USE-IT's Compressed Earth Blocks (CEBs) Construction

An innovative process that uses a 30% blend of builder's waste rubble and available clay-bearing soils in the manufacture of Compressed Earth Blocks (CEBs). Building sustainable homes with the lowest carbon footprint, CEBs are 3-5 times stronger than concrete blocks, cheaper, ten times more thermally efficient and environmentally-friendly.

In the Comfortable Home category - Lumkani

Lumkani is a low-cost fire detector and alert system designed for low-income households. In the event of fire, the system not only alerts the inhabitants where the fire has started, it uses transmission mechanisms to trigger neighbouring devices within the system up to 100 metres from the source of the fire. Lumkani can also provide the nearest fire station with the GPS location of the fire allowing for proactive early response.

In the Connected Home category - Cityspec

This open source mobile inspection tool helps civil society organisations and community workers to monitor and administer basic service delivery in informal settlements. This mobile app allows community workers to log reports in the field, take photos and capture GPS data automatically.

A grand prize of half a million rand's worth of support services has been awarded to each of these winners to help enable them to upscale and take their solutions to market – facilitating the concept-to-market value chain for innovative and affordable home improvement solutions. Although the Better Living Challenge is specifically aimed at lower LSM groups, the award-winning innovations can apply across various communities.

In addition to the above, two Student Awards were made. The winning solutions were Brigado (a brick-making kit designed by Tshwane University of Technology student Rotenda Gene Nevhutalu) and Embracing Informality (an architectural development plan submitted by Lawden Holmes from the University of Cape Town). Both these awards were made in the Structural Home Category and each received a R40 000 cash prize.

In order to ensure that the competition was judged fairly, the outcome was determined by a combination of scores from a panel of judges (60%); community votes (30%); and a public voting component (10%). Final scores were independently audited by KPMG. The judging panel consisted of 14 prominent industry leaders with expertise in renewable energy, sustainability, green architecture, community development, product development, business investment, as well as product and industrial design.

The announcement of the winners ushers in the next phase of the competition - the market access phase - where the winners' solutions will be supported to market. The Better Living Challenge was launched over a year ago, and is a 110% Green initiative. Aimed at boosting the green economy, at the same time, the challenge addresses housing issues in low-income communities. 110% Green is steered by Jenny Cargill, who is a special advisor to the Premier of the Western Cape, in the office of the Premier. In response to the announcement of the winners, Jenny Cargill said:

“We would like to congratulate all the participants of the Better Living Challenge and particularly the winners, who have demonstrated exceptional skills and expertise in their efforts to encourage positive change to better the lives of others.”

The Better Living Challenge is project-managed by the Cape Craft + Design Institute (CCDI), on behalf of 110% Green. Erica Elk, Executive Director at the Cape Craft & Design Institute commented: “We heartily congratulate the winners, and would like to extend praise to all the Finalists and Exhibitors that participated in the Better Living Challenge. The enthusiastic public response to the recent Showcase has affirmed the need for affordable green solutions. We look forward to the next phase of the project, which will involve further assisting the winners with market access. That said, we already know that the Showcase itself has been an incredible boost for all the participants involved, with several exhibitors and finalists already having elicited commercial interest as a result of the competition.”

The Better Living Challenge is a collaborative project between the public and private sector, and civil society demonstrating that these partnerships work to promote economic development. It is an official project (WDC#204) of the Cape Town World Design Capital 2014 (WDC2014) programme.

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For more information: www.betterlivingchallenge.co.za | Facebook - The Better Living Challenge | Twitter – @TheBLChallenge

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