Indoor – Outdoor
Site-responsive school, Jacmel, Haiti

Main authors
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Summary by the jury
The project for a school in Jacmel, Haiti, for 400 students takes advantage of the topography of the site, introducing reinforced concrete slabs on different levels that adapt to the slope. Grouped as independent units with three walls forming a C-shaped space, the repetitive modules are based on a regular grid, changing position according to programmatic requirements. This results in places of different proportions, orientation, degrees of privacy and intensities of sunlight or shade. The construction technique is simple and can be pursued in stages, and equipped to minimize the impact of seismic activity. To benefit from the enormous amount of rain during wet seasons, roofs are designed to collect rainwater in tanks, and a drainage system uses wastewater for landscape irrigation. The project creates a child-friendly environment, a place full of mysteries and surprises that stimulates imagination and creativity.

Appraisal by the jury
A range of aspects impressed the jury. First, the project’s aim to explore alternative educational models was greatly valued, particularly the provision of indoor as well as outdoor teaching activities and manifold classroom configurations for different teaching methods. Second, the notion of the school as a kind of city with classroom units forming “neighborhood clusters” was considered an excellent contribution to the design of educational facilities. Third, the jury applauded the type of development cooperation proposed by a foreign actor, Fundacja Polska-Haiti, in a country needing support, a collaboration of equal partners. All in all, the project offers an important contribution to discourses on sustainability, going beyond standard formulas.

Project data
Context: Architecture, building and civil engineering
Client: Fundacja Polska-Haiti
Background: Public commission
Planned start: January 2014

Further authors
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Image 3: Situation of the school; Diagrams of the sustainable solution used in the project.

Image 4: Elevation, section and the main floor plan.

Image 5: View of the classrooms on both sides of the building.

Image 6: Relation of the interior with the surroundings.

Image 7: View of the school from the green patio.

Image 8: Different moments of the building related to the surroundings (model scale 1:100).

Image 9: Modularity and construction system (model scale 1:50).

Image 10: One of the first sketches of the project.

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