Cooperation is a real pioneering achievement

Entries for the first Holcim Awards competition must be finalized only a few weeks’ time. In an interview given on the side of a meeting with the partner universities, Marc Angéli (below, right) and Benno Hossbach take stock for the first time. ETH professor Angéli is an architect and member of the Board of the Holcim Foundation and its Technical Competence Center, while Benno Hossbach is responsible for the technical side of the competition with his Berlin-based company [phase eins].

“Foundations”: Since November 2004, interested parties from around the world have been able to find out about the competition and submit their projects on www.holcimawards.org. What is the level of interest?

Benno Hossbach: It’s too early to come up with a quantitative figure, because experience shows that with competitions like this most projects only get submitted just before the deadline. There is nevertheless an interesting aspect to this: we can monitor exactly who is looking at the posting on the
Internet. This enabled us to establish that the Holcim Awards are exhibiting a major global reach – so far we’ve been able to register visitors from more than 130 countries! That’s something you certainly can’t take for granted with a new project.

The number of hits for www.holcimawards.org varies considerably from region to region, and so far the number of project entries has also fluctuated strongly from country to country. What do you attribute this to?

Benno Hossbach: Communication about the Holcim Awards needs to take place primarily through personal conversations, because in this instance we’re talking about quite an unusual prize. Equally important is the corresponding commitment of the partner universities and the local Holcim Group companies. When Holcim Brazil, Minetti Argentina or Holcim Romania, for instance, supported the competition with an event of their own, the number of people visiting the website from these regions jumped sharply.

Marc Angéli: In North America and Western Europe, it’s obviously more difficult to generate excitement – because initiatives such as this are much more frequent here. The partner universities and Holcim companies in these regions therefore face an especially difficult challenge.

Participation in the Holcim Awards is only possible via the web – that’s a first for a competition on this scale. Are the entrants managing to cope with this in technical terms?

Benno Hossbach: It’s relatively easy to take part – as long as you have some degree of familiarity with the Internet. For someone with no Internet experience it’s slightly more complex, but it shouldn’t be forgotten that for a participant from Tanzania, for instance, it would be much more difficult and costly to submit their project by more old-fashioned means.

What type of projects have been submitted?

Benno Hossbach: Though the competition is basically open to anyone in the world of construction, most of the entries so far are from the architecture segment – indeed two-thirds of all entrants are architects.

Marc Angéli: It must be said, however, that architecture is a multidisciplinary subject. If an architect submits a project, engineers, landscape designers, town planners and the like are generally involved as well. There are usually large teams behind these projects.

Can you say something about the quality of the projects submitted?

Benno Hossbach: Not yet. We’re simply looking at the entries in terms of formal criteria; an initial qualitative sifting will then be taken by special teams at our partner universities, and a final assessment will be made by the juries.

Cooperation with the universities is important not just in terms of the evaluations. What form does this take?

Marc Angéli: There are naturally differences in mentality between universities from various different regions of the world, and these are reflected in communication, for instance.

Benno Hossbach: It’s clear that the universities have other roles to play in various areas and other objectives to pursue – and indeed must pursue – unlike the Holcim Foundation, which is firmly rooted in the private manufacturing sector. The fact that the private and public sectors are working together on a project like this is a real pioneering achievement – an experiment that needs a lot of coordination work.

Where do the universities put the emphasis in terms of this cooperation?

Marc Angéli: On the academic aspects mainly. The Holcim Forum (see “Foundations2”) was a first step in this direction – and a major success in the university context – the forum content due to appear shortly will be another step forward. But we will need to define further platforms on which to build a scientific discourse.

Interview: Marius Leutenegger
The path of the Holcim Foundation is mapped out

The Holcim Foundation had its first birthday in December 2004, and like proud parents who have spent a year attending to “Basic Needs”, we are encouraging and supporting the baby to taking its first steps and venturing out into the world – with the Holcim Awards competition and ceremonies.

Several hundred applications in the Awards have already been received with more anticipated before the close of entries on March 31, 2005 (see page 10).

With the energetic support of Group companies in all regions, the Holcim Awards announcement campaign is currently being implemented. Beyond lodging the advertisements in relevant publications, many Group companies have launched highly developed local campaigns to raise awareness of the Awards competition.

In this issue of Foundations, Holcim’s participation in the Biennale of Ecuador, a Sustainable Construction meeting in Bangladesh, and other events in Africa, Brazil, Argentina, Morocco and Romania provide a sample of the leverage which local communications events have created (see pages 12–15).

The basis of partnership with five of the world’s leading technical universities has been agreed, and internationally-renowned representatives from science, business and society have been appointed to the regional juries. The Foundation’s Technical Competence Center (ETH Zurich) and heads of each of the regional juries met for the first time to formalize the appraisal procedure for the Holcim Awards (see page 4).

The path of the Holcim Foundation is firmly mapped out – with architectural excellence and enhanced quality of life as integral elements of our vision of sustainable construction. Building the reputation of the Holcim Foundation and, hence, of the Holcim brand remain the key targets throughout 2005.

Help build foundations for the future. Meet the challenge and enter the first global Holcim Awards competition for projects in sustainable construction*. Prize money totals USD 2 million. Apply at www.holcimawards.org

Holcim Awards is a competition of the Holcim Foundation for Sustainable Construction based in Switzerland. The independent Foundation is an initiative of Holcim Ltd, one of the world’s leading suppliers of cement, aggregates, concrete and construction-related services with Group companies and affiliates in more than 70 countries.
Launching a competition is one thing – seeing it through to its conclusion is another matter entirely! Especially when it’s a global competition that’s dealing with a highly complex topic – as with the Holcim Awards. On February 11-12, 2005, representatives of the five partner universities held a meeting with the Holcim Foundation in Zurich with a view to agreeing the challenging task of staging the Holcim Awards.

The Holcim Awards are the centerpiece of the Holcim Foundation – and a particularly demanding one at that. Across the five world regions, the hunt is on for the best sustainable construction projects. Individual winners will be put forward to the global competition, which concludes in April 2006 with a ceremony in Bangkok. To ensure this extensive project is successful at the highest possible level, the Holcim Foundation is working closely with some of the best technical universities in the world: Tongji University in Shanghai (TDX), China, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Boston, USA, the Universidade de São Paulo (USP), Brazil and the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Technical Competence Center for the competition as a whole, and with responsibility for staging the European round, is the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH Zurich). It invited the partner universities to an initial meeting on February 11-12.

Portuguese in China?
Even in the opening moments of this highly stimulating conference it became clear that the requirements for all participants are enormous and probably somewhat greater than most had imagined. The world is often described as a global village, but the Holcim Awards show that there are still many hurdles to overcome in this village. First of all there’s the language problem, for instance. Projects may only be submitted in one of the competition’s four languages – English, Portuguese,
Spanish and French – but the MIT’s Professor Leon Glicksman probably took the words right out of everybody’s mouths when he said: “What on earth am I supposed to do when we get contributions in a language that’s not our own?”

Projects, not buildings
Luckily, the representatives of the five partner universities already know each other well – most of them had already taken part in the first Holcim Forum last September. This ensures support is available to bridge the language barrier. Nevertheless, there are many thorny issues that still have to be overcome. The “advanced stage of design” in which a project must be in order for it to be submitted was a repeated subject of discussion. So castles in the air do not qualify for the competition – but neither do projects that have already been implemented. “As far as the next cycle of the competition, we will need to discuss the details”, reckons the ETH’s Professor Hans-Rudolf Schalcher, who chaired the meeting in Zurich. “For this round, however, we need to work within the parameters that have been defined.”

Highly stimulating presentations and discussions at the meeting of partner universities.
The jury members are convinced that a proper procedure has been set up to give every submitted project an appropriate appraisal.

“Not interested in the status quo!”
A central issue of the meeting was the five target issues – those criteria against which the submitted projects will be measured:

- Quantum change and transferability
- Ethical standards and social equity
- Ecological quality and energy conservation
- Economic performance and compatibility
- Contextual response and aesthetic impact

In what was a lively debate, the attendees sought to develop a common understanding in relation to the evaluation criteria. Here too there was evidence of the significance of regional differences – in each of the five competition regions, the focal points in terms of the evaluation criteria probably show a slight variation. But what’s important across the board is the concept of innovation, since “we are not interested in the status quo”, stressed ETH-Professor Marc Angélil. The architect is a member of the Technical Competence Center in Zurich, which is responsible for monitoring the technical aspects of the overall competition.

Universities to sort through the entries
It will be up to the universities to rise to the challenge, in particular once the deadline for entering the competition has expired. Before then, [phase eins] will be examining all projects from a formal perspective; the Berlin-based company, which specializes in project management for architecture and urban development, is responsible for the entire Internet-based staging of the Holcim Awards. Properly submitted projects are forwarded by [phase eins] to the universities – without providing any evaluation of its own. Teams of experts – put together by the universities – evaluate the entries and draw up a list of those projects that correspond best to the five target issues for submission to the jury. This list is not binding for the jury, but makes its work easier because projects without significance to the target issues of sustainable construction have already been separated out.

No paper tigers!
Where the juries, which are made up of independent specialists, have decided to make a Holcim Award to a particular project, it is examined once again intensively – “presumably we’ll also be dealing with projects that have no chance of ever being realized”, as Professor Vanderley John from the University of São Paolo pointed out. However, one of the key planks is: Awards are only given to real construction projects. No “Pie in the sky” ideas, or projects that look good on paper but do not make any contribution to a sustainable future.
International media campaign heralds first Awards competition

The international media campaign to launch the first Holcim Awards competition has been a collaborative effort involving Group companies in 48 countries and the Holcim Foundation.

More than 600 advertisements have appeared in international and local professional publications including Architectural Review and Engineering News Record in 25 languages to raise awareness of the competition with those involved in sustainable construction projects.

A series of architectural sketches, common text and layout of the advertisements have provided the Holcim Awards competition and the Holcim brand with its first international exposure. The layout aims to inspire projects in architecture, landscape and urban design, civil and mechanical engineering and other related disciplines to take part in the competition and share in the USD 2 million prize money allocated for the five regional competitions and global Awards.

Supplementing the advertisements, Group companies have implemented inspiring local programs (see pages 12–15) to increase awareness of the Holcim Awards competition and build the reputation of the global Holcim brand.
Foundations 3

Workshop aims to build competence in sustainable construction

Working groups at the Holcim Senior Management Program (SMP) were asked: “How can the Holcim Awards competition best contribute to sustainable construction?”

Ensuring the Awards become internationally-renowned and respected in the construction industry and beyond was the difficult challenge at the center of a project SMP participants were asked to undertake in February this year. The project was initiated by Walter Baumgartner, Head of Holcim Corporate Training and Learning and managed by specialists from IMD Lausanne, Switzerland.

During an intensive week of discussions, break-out sessions were held where two groups from a total of five analyzed and formulated concrete proposals on how to increase participation from around the world in the current Holcim Awards competition.

Communication needs to improve and be effective
The two working groups – comprising a broad mix of individuals (see box) – both came to the conclusion that in general a greater degree of commitment was required by Group companies. In the concluding presentations reasons cited for the varying importance currently accorded to the Awards competition included a lack of awareness and management involvement. This deficiency is not blamed on inadequate information, for instance, but that in many instances, communication does not reach the right people in a format that’s right for them.

Building on a successful initial Awards round
It is of the utmost urgency – and here too the working groups were in full agreement – that everything is done to achieve a broader geographical reach for the first Holcim Award competition (see page 10): around half of all entries so far are from Latin America. It is now up to each and every Holcim employee, regardless of where they work, their grade or function, to actively inform colleagues, and point architects, engineers, planners and others in the direction of this exciting competition. All entries must be submitted via www.holcimawards.org by March 31, 2005.

The sky’s the limit as far as promoting the competition and its USD 2 million prize money is concerned. So “steal with pride and implement quickly” was the good advice the working groups had for Group companies. “Live the culture and spread the word.”

Building the reputation of the Holcim Awards competition enables the Foundation to promote the practical application of sustainable construction – and make a tangible contribution to sustainability.

Holcim SMP participants in the working groups “Foundation & Awards”
Jan Babst, Switzerland
Mauro Bonafé, Italy
Dominique Drouet, Morocco
Juan Miguel Lahitte, Spain
Mario Montano, Guatemala
Karl Meissner-Roloff, South Africa
Cédric Nater, Azerbaijan
Claude A. Rüttimann, Morocco
Richard Skene, Hungary
Nopporn Thepsithar, Thailand
Flooris van der Walt, Switzerland

Conclusions SMP working group 2
• With a long term vision this project increases our Strength.
• With a sense of urgency on all levels we will achieve desired Performance.
• A great project like this deserves more Passion.

Foundations 3
Media coverage

The Holcim Awards awareness campaign has been a coordinated effort between the Holcim Foundation and participating Group companies – the result has been significant global media interest in the Awards competition.

Beyond the advertising campaign, media coverage has provided stakeholders with additional information about the Awards competition, its purpose and sponsor in more than 25 languages on all continents. Over 200 newspaper articles, radio reports, television reports and website articles have been generated from efforts so far – all motivating potential entries in the Awards competition, and raising stakeholder awareness.

A compilation of media coverage is available on HolSpace at: https://web.holcim.com/foundation/Content/media/media.htm
Online competition:
web-based applications
are just the beginning

The use of the Internet goes far beyond the exclusively web-based application procedure co-developed with technology partner [phase- eins]. When applications close on March 31, the second Internet-based phase of the competition will begin. The pre-assessment by teams at each partner university of the Foundation, and evaluation by the independent regional juries will also be Internet-based.

This pioneering approach enhances the capability of eminent representatives from science, business and society to participate in the regional juries. Significant time and money is saved, compared to the logistics of arranging rounds of assessment meetings and coordinating the distribution of printed applications.

Mid-way through the competition entry period, more than 440 projects have commenced the application process. Many more applications are anticipated to be received in the next weeks, as more than 3,000 copies of the "Step-by-step" Guide to completing the application form have been downloaded from the Holcim Awards website.

In addition to the 440-plus project entries, more than 34,000 people have visited the Holcim Awards website from over 130 countries. The number of visitors ramped up immediately after the first advertisements appeared in newspapers and journals worldwide and decreased during the year-end holiday period. Visitor numbers have then risen consistently each week since – and indicate a continued interest in the Awards competition. With a high proportion of visitors to the website staying for more than a few minutes, and viewing several pages of the site, the level of interest

Profession of entrants in the Holcim Awards competition – strong representation by architects.

- Architects 55%
- Engineers 10%
- Construction 5%
- Students 20%
- Other 10%
in the competition for sustainable construction projects is encouraging.

Professional architects are strongly represented in the applications received to date. Engineers, students, and construction contractors have also submitted entries, indicating that there will be a blend of concepts and approaches from a professional viewpoint, to add to the geographic and cultural diversity of entries.

The Internet presence of the Awards competition doesn’t end at www.holcimawards.org – all Group companies using the Holcim.Com (BroadVision) website solution have included a special section on their local sites. This enables the Holcim Awards to have an Internet presence in more than 20 languages and informs a wider audience of local stakeholder groups.

Awards ceremonies set to showcase sustainable construction

In September/October 2005, winners of the Holcim Awards will be announced at gala ceremonies in each of the five competition regions. Each ceremony will award a total of up to nine prizes.

The Holcim Awards events will include an evening announcement of Award winners, dinner and an address by an internationally-renowned keynote speaker. The following day will include a touring program for all attendees and a media conference to provide substantial and substantive media coverage that positions Holcim as a company with competencies within the field of sustainability that acts beyond the boundaries of its own industry.

As well as celebrating the winning entries and promoting the concept of sustainable construction, the events will also provide an opportunity to promote Holcim to key stakeholders. Group companies within each region will be able to invite key customers or other stakeholders to the event. The event demonstrates Holcim’s commitment to the triple bottom line of economic, environmental, and social performance and also showcases the Group’s regional presence and future-oriented approach to the building and construction industry.

### Region | Number of invited Group companies | City/Venue | Dates
--- | --- | --- | ---
Europe | 17 | Geneva, Switzerland, Bâtiment des Forces Motrices | 15/16-Sep-05
Asia Pacific | 11 | Beijing, China, The Great Hall of People | 22/23-Sep-05
North America | 2 | Boston, USA, Venue tbc | 29/30-Sep-05
Africa | 7 | Johannesburg, South Africa, Sandton Convention Centre | 13/14-Oct-05
Middle East | 9 | Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Venue tbc | 21/22-Oct-05
Latin America | 11–20
Asia | 31–40
Europe | 41–50
North America | 50+
More than 550 opinion leaders attend Awards launch events in Brazil

Since the launch of the Holcim Awards competition in November 2004, Holcim Brazil has implemented a set of activities to raise awareness of the sustainable construction competition with as many stakeholders as possible.

Employees were informed about the Foundation and Awards competition by e-mail and an article in Painel, the internal magazine of Holcim Brazil. The issue of Painel also featured a special editorial by CEO Carlos Bühler on the Holcim Awards competition. A workshop for the sales team was held to inform them about the competition and enlist their assistance in spreading the news about the Awards. These events took place in parallel with the global awareness campaign of the Holcim Awards where advertisements were placed in both technical magazines and Brazil’s major daily newspapers.

With the concept of sustainable construction relatively new in Brazil and sometimes misunderstood: launch events were planned that explained the scope of sustainable construction and introduced the Awards competition. The first event was held in the national capital, Brasília, and included an address by CEO Carlos Bühler. Other events followed in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Vitória and Minas Gerais. All events were attended by the Commercial Director who provided an opening address, and were coordinated locally by members of the sales team and communication team.

A round-table discussion was also organized, led by Professor Vanderley John, Associate Professor in the Department of Construction Engineering from the University of São Paulo (USP). The purpose of the round-table was to encourage discussion on defining sustainable construction in Brazil. More than 500 architects, engineers, government representatives, NGOs, customers and students attended the very successful event. USP is also the Holcim Foundation’s partner university for region Latin America.

Journalists were a significant target audience of the local awareness campaign. They were invited to take part in the events mentioned above, and received media releases about the Awards competition. Journalists from prominent newspapers O Globo (Rio de Janeiro) and O Estado de São Paulo (São Paulo) interviewed the Commercial Director and the Communications Manager. Details of information about the Awards competition appeared in newspapers, magazines and on the Internet.

A poster was created to attract attention on notice boards of universities, associations and government offices. The nicest part of this approach was that employees have assisted identifying institutions and people who should be made aware of the Awards – taking posters and the responsibility of promoting the competition into their own hands.

Holcim Brazil will host the regional Awards ceremony for Latin America in October 2005 in Rio de Janeiro.

Maria Angélica Rotondaro, Holcim Brazil
Icon of sustainability launches Awards in Bangladesh

Muhammad Yunus – Advisory Board member of the Holcim Foundation, and founder of the one of the world’s largest micro-credit financiers, the Grameen Bank, launched the Holcim Awards competition in Bangladesh.

The Holcim Awards competition was launched in October 2004 at an event where eminent keynote speaker Muhammad Yunus attracted architects, engineers, planners, economists and thinkers of Bangladesh.

The people of Bangladesh are extremely proud of the achievements of Muhammad Yunus – and rightly so. Thirty years ago, after completing studies in economics in the United States, Yunus realized that many people needed only a small amount of money to create their own employment and alleviate poverty. Now the Grameen Bank has a credit sum of more than USD 4.5 billion, and operates in 3500 villages throughout the country.

Yunus explained that he was inspired to join the Advisory Board of the Holcim Foundation because of the similarities between Holcim and the Grameen Bank. Both have origins in a small village – and both have a vision for providing a sustainable foundation for society’s future.

Executive Committee member, Paul Hugentobler, spoke of Holcim’s long tradition of incorporating sustainability into its business practices – outlining current initiatives to decrease CO$_2$ and other emissions, and its active role in the Cement Sustainability Initiative of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development.

Shankar Kumar Roy, Holcim Bangladesh

Holcim Awards at Pan-American Architecture Biennale

The Holcim Awards competition was introduced to architects from North, Central and South America during the 14th Pan-American Architecture Biennale held in Ecuador in November 2004.

The Bienale de Arquitectura de Quito (BAQ) is supported by the International Association of Architects (UIA) and is considered one of the most important events for architects across The Americas, and is held in the world heritage listed city of Quito. The event provides a common ground where professionals meet and exchange ideas about work being developed in the region. German-based architectural critics Andreas and Ilka Ruby from the firm “textbild” in Cologne presented the Holcim Awards competition to participants – explaining in detail the five “target issues” of the competition, and their links to sustainable construction.

Andreas Ruby, Germany
Awards presentations spark interest in region Africa Middle East

Partner university of the Holcim Foundation, the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) in Johannesburg is energetically promoting the Holcim Awards competition to architects, engineers and students across the vast region of Africa Middle East. Many countries in the region don’t have an active Holcim Group company – rendering the presentations in many cases the first local taste of the Foundation and Awards competition.

Three presentation tours have been conducted so far, covering East and Southern Africa; West and North Africa; and the Middle East. Awards coordinator at Wits, Daniel Irurah, has enlisted the support of four PhD students including Holcim Forum 2004 attendee Jani Loots as well as Assa Arif, Stanley Gichia, and Philippe Yavo.

Stanley Gichia, an architect with research interests in sustainable built environment, prepared the tour of East and Southern Africa that included visits to architectural associations and universities in Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Mr Gichia was not the only voice endorsing the Holcim Awards at each location. The presentations have been delivered in collaboration with attendees from the first Holcim Forum; Jürg Flühmann, CEO of the local Holcim subsidiary (Tanga Cement) in Tanzania; and the Chairman of the Architectural Association of Kenya. In Ethiopia, the Holcim Awards competition was presented during the 9th Conference and Annual General Meeting of the Association of Ethiopian Architects held in Adama, a new city about 100 km from Addis Ababa.

While the logistics of organizing the tours has not been all smooth-sailing, each event has sparked keen interest in the competition, and reinforced the importance of sustainable construction in diverse societies, economies and climates. With relatively high visitor numbers to the Holcim Awards website, and the promise by numerous attendees to submit a project to the competition, the promotional tours have been the cornerstone of raising awareness.

Roadshow inspires Romanian youth and talent

Holcim Romania included a roadshow to the nation’s leading universities to bring the Holcim Awards competition to life – and leads the number of entries in the competition for region Europe.

CEO Jürg Flühmann of Holcim Group company Tanga Cement in Tanzania presents and introduction to Holcim and the Awards competition.

The Romanian people have long been recognized for their creativity, in sports, science and the arts. Abstract sculptor, Constantin Brancusi; winner of the Nobel Prize for Medicine, George Constantin Palade; and US Open and French Open tennis champion, Ilie Nastase are part of a national tradition of ingenuity. The Holcim Awards competition provides another opportunity for creativity – in the field of sustainable construction.

An integrated communications strategy in Romania aimed not only to inform stakeholders of the Awards competition, but also inspire people to enter their most inventive approaches.

Advertisements in specialist magazines; electronic banners on the websites of universities and professional associations; posters and flyers all preceded the Holcim Awards presentations at the four leading universities of architecture and construction.

The presentations by a team from Holcim Romania explained the Holcim Awards concept and the benefits of entering. Questions were answered – and Romanian youth and talent were inspired to become involved. With the fifth-highest number of visits to the Holcim Awards website, and the most entries received for region Europe to date – the results of this full-mosaic approach are encouraging indeed.

Luminita Oprea, Holcim Romania
Launch event in Argentina generates strong interest in Awards competition

More than 130 people representing professional organizations, industry and universities from across Argentina attended the Holcim Awards launch event in November 2004. The event was held at the Alvear Palace Hotel in Buenos Aires and included a lunch to enable further discussions and interaction between participants.

Minetti’s Institutional Relationships Manager, Demetrio Brusco, provided an overview of the Holcim Foundation and the key points of the Awards competition. Corporate General Manager, Eduardo Kretschmer, explained why Holcim had created the Holcim Foundation, and placed the competition in the broader context of Holcim’s commitment to sustainable development. Professor John Martin Evans, Center for Habitat and Energy, University of Buenos Aires (also member of the regional Awards jury for Latin America) endorsed the Awards competition as a means of sharing and promoting innovation in sustainable construction. Paula Gómez Ortega, Fundación Urbana and Silvia de Schiller, University of Buenos Aires presented their experiences and outlined the main challenges for sustainable construction at the global and national level.

In a closing address, Minetti President, Manuel Augusto Ferrer, encouraged attendees to enter the Awards competition and pursue the goals of sustainable construction in their own contexts. Information packs on the Awards were distributed to all attendees at the close of the event.

A host of prominent guests in Casablanca

The Holcim Foundation for Sustainable Construction relies on the support of local Group companies to promote the Holcim Awards. Holcim Morocco amply demonstrated that the Foundation can count on this support, pulling out all the stops to make the Awards known to the target group and staging a VIP event.

On February 15, 2005 Holcim Maroc organized a meeting in Casablanca assembling the media, architects, construction planners, representatives of architecture schools and numerous others to brief them on the modalities and goals of the Holcim Awards. The event attracted a huge response, which goes to show the significance of the Awards in Morocco. The General Director of the country’s largest and most influential daily newspaper was there, as was a member of the Radio Nationale team. Holcim’s representatives included Holcim Morocco CEO Dominique Drouet – and Holcim Foundation Board member Claude Fussler, who flew to Morocco especially for the event.

Morocco well represented in the regional jury

There are two well-known Moroccans on the regional Holcim Awards jury – Rachid Benmokhtar, President of Al-Akhawayn University, Morocco, and Said Mouline, Director of Architecture, Minister representing the Prime Minister. They both took part in last September’s Holcim Forum in Zurich, demonstrating their considerable expertise in all matters relating to the Holcim Awards. The success of the event was also reflected in the lively interest shown by all attendees – and by the large number of calls received after the meeting. The Holcim Awards have definitely made their mark in Morocco.

Sougad Terab, Holcim Morocco

Moroccan members of the regional jury for Europe Said Mouline and Rachid Benmokhtar (2nd and 1st from right) talk to guests.
No matter how one defines sustainability, it always has to do with the future. That is why the Holcim Foundation for Sustainable Construction seeks dialogue with the young people who one day as architects and engineers will be decisively contributing to the implementation of sustainable concepts.

At the Holcim Forum for Sustainable Construction held last September in Zurich it was evident just how intense this dialog can be – because young people seem to be especially sensitive to environmental problems and social issues, and thus to sustainability.

In the last edition of “Foundations” we reported that the five partner universities of the Foundation had each invited five students to the Forum. The young participants inspired the Forum with their ideas and their vigor, and also with their “student posters.” On large posters they presented their projects in sustainable construction – work ranging from architectural plans for development projects to computer programs for estimating the energy consumption of buildings in the planning phase.

The participants of the Forum were asked to choose the best of the 21 projects.

Winning third place in the small competition was Johanna M. Loots of the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. Second place went to Fang Xu and Feng Qu of Tongji University in Shanghai. The winning project was designed by a team of three students from the ETH Zurich: Ivica Brnic, Florian Graf, and Wolfgang Rossbauer. The team plans to use optimized traditional technologies in the reconstruction of a war-ravaged university building in Afghanistan. Although only three projects could be recognized, all 21 student posters offered exciting and provocative ideas. An exhibition of the 21 large posters is now on tour, so that the ideas can inspire a broader audience.

Currently at the ETH Hönggerberg in Zurich, one of the world’s most important architecture and engineering schools, the collection is stimulating discussions about sustainable construction – proving there are many ways that lead to a sustainable future.