## 12 projects win Dubai award for best practices

Farhana Chowdhury 30 March 2011 www.khaleejtimes.com

DUBAI — Twelve international projects aimed to promote better living conditions for people around the globe beat hundreds of others in the eighth cycle of the Dubai International Award for Best Practices to Improve the Living Environment (DIABP).

The winners were awarded US\$30,000 each along with a trophy and a certificate of merit in a ceremony held at the Dubai Cultural and Scientific Association on Tuesday.

"Today, we are celebrating the eighth cycle of contributions that target on how to make the living environment better for people around the world. Some of these practices have been implemented in the community and main goal is to promote best methods to improve the environment for people to live in. We are here to share ideas and concepts with the rest of the world and to provide international recognition for outstanding efforts," said Obaid Salem Al Shamsi, Assistant Director-General for International Affairs and Partnerships Sector, Dubai Municipality.

A short film presented during the event showed that around 900 million people do not have access to safe drinking water while 2.6 billion people do not have enough sanitation facilities. About one billion people are slum dwellers and more than 900 million people go to bed hungry and 78 per cent of these are women and children.

The Dubai International Award for Best Practices included winners from Angola, Kenya, Lebanon, Mongolia, Bulgaria, Brazil, El Salvador, Mexico and two winners from Spain.

Another category titled the Best Practices Transfer saw two winners — Austria and Argentina.

Allan Cain, director of development workshop who received the award for Luanda Urban Poverty Programme (LUPP) along with programme director Willy Piassa, said the amount won will be used to help further finance the project.

"The LUPP started in 1999 to influence public policy for poverty reduction. The recognition and the public award will certainly promote some of the replication of good practices. We have been working on a community-based strategy and focusing on things like micro-finance for the community and water programmes as well as working with local administration, local programmes and with the local government in resolving some of these critical poverty needs," said Cain.

"Angola is a post-conflict country that suffered four decades of war. After the ceasefire in 2002, there was a massive movement of population from rural areas into Luanda, the capital city. It became a large informal settlement area and many people came without any resources and it became a city of the poor."

The Dubai International Award for Best Practices was initiated in 1995 and is held every two years.

## Winners Of Award For Best Practices

- Angola: Luanda Urban Poverty Programme (LUPP) The programme aims to provide basic services such as water, sanitation, child care support and microfinance to the poor in Luanda.
- **Brazil:** Cities Without Hunger, Sao Paulo An NGO that has introduced an alternative to social security food baskets by promoting the community to participate in production of food and making use of vacant public and private land for vegetable gardens.
- **Bulgaria:** Composting a livelihood for Roma Ethnic Minority to manage domestic, animal and agricultural waste.
- **El Salvador:** Recovery of housing complex in the Historical Center of San Salvador Raise awareness and support for rights and mobilising beneficiaries through housing cooperatives.
- **Kenya:** Shift toward improving the urban living environment to tackle growing environmental sanitation crises in the region's urban areas.
- **Lebanon:** Sustainable Environmental Practices and Policies by Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) Environmental education programme to redirect national policies on waste and water management.
- **Mexico:** Transfer of appropriate technologies for the provisioning, management and disposal of water in an indigenous community in the municipality of Zinacantan, Chiapas.
- **Mongolia:** Environment-friendly products that control plastic bag waste by using them to produce covers for plumbing wells, fences, posts, chairs, benches, railway parts among others.
- **Spain:** Educating for sustainability: the Barcelona Schools Agenda 21 Programe, designed to diagnose, provide solutions and undertake commitments to make a more sustainable city starting with the immediate environment such as the school itself.
- **Spain** (second winner): Municipal Climate Change Plan Noain Achieved many results such as eight renewable energy facilities, and change in energy consumption trends where in 2006 electricity usage went down 10 per cent and in 2007, another 6 per cent. More than 31,000 trees and bushes have been planted in urban areas.

## **Best Practice Transfer Awards**

- **Argentina:** Legal extensions through neighbours, Mendoza where ordinary people are given legal and civic training to access justice. The programme works with financially vulnerable groups.
- Austria: Vienna buys ecologically, City of Vienna aims to enhance Vienna's procurement system's compatibility with the principles of climate protection and European Union (EU) procurement regulations.

farhana@khaleejtimes.com