

Architecture in the Aftermath of Disasters

Towards Sustainable and Community-Based Reconstruction in Post-Earthquake Morocco

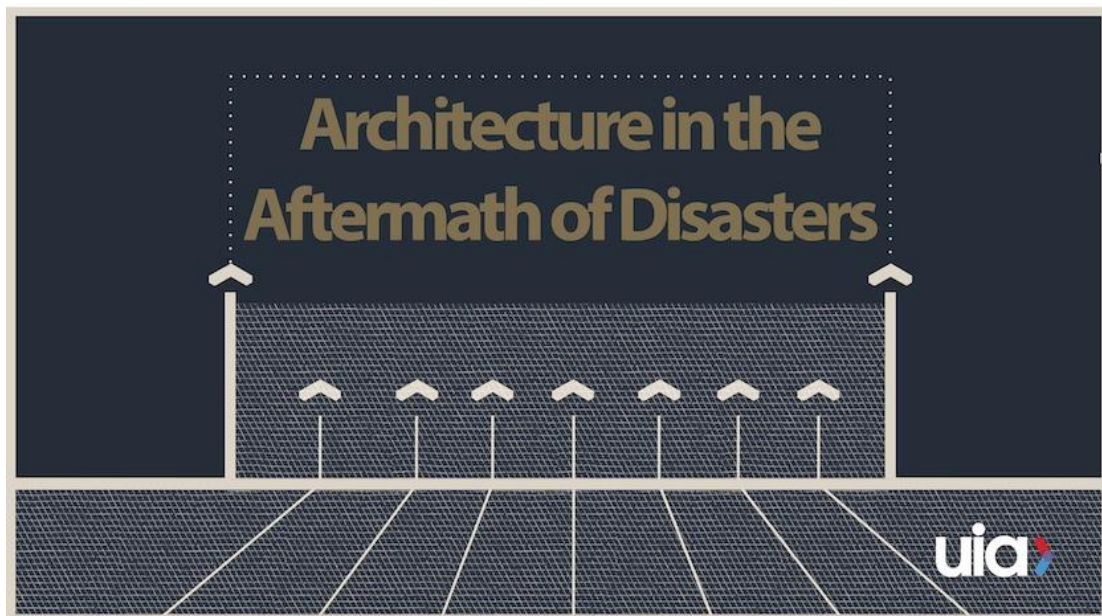


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Introduction

This international single stage ideas competition invites young architects to imagine new forms of architectural intervention in the aftermath of disaster, focusing on the 2023 earthquake in Morocco. The competition aims to raise awareness of the complex interconnection between natural and human-made crises and calls for visionary proposals that can heal, protect, and regenerate.

This competition is organized and conducted in accordance with UNESCO Standard Regulations for International Competitions in Architecture and Town planning and the UIA best practice recommendations (see UIA Competition Guide for Design Competitions in Architecture and Related Fields)

The organizer of the competition is UIA Natural and Human Disasters Work Programme (UIA NHD WP) with the expert support of the Order of Architects of Morocco.

The competition manager, responsible for the organization and conduct of the competition, is Nikolas Patsavos, Architect, Region II. NHD WP Co-Chair.

PART A: Regulations

1. Eligibility

The competition is open to young architects, either as individuals or teams, from around the world. All participants must be under the age of 40 (born after 11th March 1986.). Teams may consist of 1 to 5 members. Each participant may only join one team and submit one entry. The team leader(s) of the proposal must have the right to use the title of architect in their country of origin or residence and has/have to be also author(s) of the project.

Multidisciplinary teams are encouraged. However, only architects can serve as team leaders, Landscape architects, urban designers or urban planners can register as authors or co-authors. Team members from other disciplines can register as collaborators or consultants. Associates, employees, or family members or anyone closely related with jury members, and persons involved in the organization or preparation of the competition, are not eligible to participate. Participants are responsible for identifying and disclosing any conflicts of interest that may prevent their participation.

2. Jury

An international jury will evaluate the entries:

- Juror 1: Ar. Patrick Coulombel, France - Region I, UIA Representative, Chair
- Juror 2: Prof. Salma Samar Damluji, Lebanon-UK -Region II
- Juror 3: Ar. William Higgins, USA -Region III
- Juror 4: Ar. Joseph Kwan, Hong Kong SAR China -Region IV
- Juror 5: Prof. Ghada Farouk Hassan, Egypt -Region V
- Alternate Juror 1: Ar. Ayşen Ciravoğlu, Turkey – Region II, UIA Representative, NHD WP Member
- Alternate Juror 2: Ar. Ron Wickman, Canada -Region III

The jury will view, discuss, and evaluate all valid entries. Alternates will participate in the deliberations but will only vote if they replace a voting juror. The jury may consult the following specialists from the Order of Architects of Morocco who will assist without the right to vote: Architects Hind Benameur, Nezha Tlemcani, Hanane Bouchtella and Assia Lamzah.

Technical Committee

- Yolanda D. Reyes, Ar. (Philippines), NHD WP Co-Chair
- Debora Manarin, Ar. (Italy), NHD WP Secretary
- Samer Helmy, Ar. (Egypt), NHD WP Member

3. Prizes

- 1st prize 5000 Euros and a Certificate
- 2nd prize 4000 Euros and a Certificate
- 3rd prize 3000 Euros and a Certificate
- 4th prize 2000 Euros and a Certificate
- 5th prize 1000 Euros and a Certificate

At its discretion, the jury may also decide to allocate up to five honourable mentions to proposals of exceptional merit. Honourable Mentions will not receive any monetary prize.

All winners will have free access to the Congress and at least one team member is expected to be present at the award ceremony in Barcelona. The prizes will be delivered within 30 days after the announcement of the winners. The total prize money will be paid in full. No ex aequo prizes will be delivered. The number of prizes announced will be awarded. This is an ideas competition that does not entail a concrete project commission for the winner(s); however, prize-winners may be invited to participate in further architectural research within the UIA NHD Work Programme.

4. Calendar

- Competition Launch: 13th November 2025
- Registration Opening: 13th November 2025
- Deadline for Questions: 15th December 2025
- Deadline for Answers: 12th January 2026
- Deadline for registration and submission of Entries: 11th March 2026, 17:00 Paris time
- Jury meeting and evaluation of entries: 12th March – 8th April 2026
- Announcement of Competition Results: 15th April 2026
- Award Ceremony and Exhibition: at the UIA Barcelona Congress (28th June to 2nd July 2026)

5. Official Language

The official language of the competition is English. Entries must be submitted in the official language.

6. Registration

Participants will be required to register on the official competition platform: <http://uia-competitions.org>. Competitors will receive a code that they will use to log into the system. The code, provided at the time of registration, allows for anonymity when submitting a question or when submitting the. All the relevant reference documents are available on the [UIA website](#). No fees are required for registering.

The following will be required during registration:

- Name of the registering team leader (mandatory)
- Name of team members (mandatory, if applicable)
- Date of birth (mandatory for all)
- Country (mandatory)
- Email address (mandatory)
- Check box to confirm that the participant meets the eligibility criteria (mandatory)

Once registration is completed, each registered applicant will receive a secret random User Identification Number generated by the system. This number will be sent to the applicant via email. Nobody will be able to access the data until the jury has signed the results thus allowing access to the information.

Modification of team information:

Applicants may list up to 5 participants per team. Team members can be added or modified after the registration. The registering team leader cannot be changed. Modification can only be done at the time of submission of entries, but the information provided separately from the submission of entries.

7. Questions and Answers

Questions are only available to registered participants during the question acceptance period. No questions will be considered after this period.

Conditions and requirements will not be modified after the deadline for answers.

The competition organiser reserves the right to address similar questions together. The answers will be published at one go, on the date indicated in the calendar

Questions must be submitted anonymously, through the competition platform, and must not include any information that could identify the applicant. Any questions failing to meet these requirements will not be accepted, published or answered.

8. Deliverables

- Project deliverables: All project materials must be submitted anonymously, without any indication of the authors' names or affiliations. Submissions must be prepared digitally and uploaded to the designated competition platform before the deadline. All files should be in PDF format with a resolution of 300 dpi (max 30MB each).
- If necessary and asked, administrative documents proving that the eligibility criteria are fulfilled.

- Participants are required to submit two (2) A1-sized posters, in portrait orientation. Each poster must clearly display the competition title, the project title and the unique User Identification Number in the top-left corner. The content of the posters should effectively communicate the proposed architectural strategies and tactics for a sustainable and resilient future for the village of Izloulène, in the aftermath of the 2023 earthquake.
- The posters may indicatively include the following elements:
 - Site Plan: Including aerial photographs, site photos, and proposed drawings that show the relationship between the urban or territorial context and the intervention site. The scale and type of content will depend on the chosen design approach (territorial, village, or architectural scale).
 - Architectural Drawings: Plans, sections, and elevations presented at appropriate scales (e.g., 1:500, 1:200, 1:100, or 1:50), based on the scale and detail of the proposed intervention.
 - Diagrams: Illustrative diagrams explaining both the current situation and the proposed strategies.
 - 3D Representations: These may include sketches, renderings, collages, or a hybrid of different visual techniques.
 - Project Description: A short explanatory text (maximum 500 words) must be integrated into the panels, clearly outlining the concept, intentions, and strategies behind the design.
 - Participants are free to choose the drawing scales, representation techniques, and layout composition that best express their ideas and architectural vision.

9. Submission and Anonymity

All entries should only indicate the registration code provided by the competition organizers. Submission is strictly via the UIA competition platform <http://uia-competitions.org>. The User Identification Number provided at the time of registration will enable participants to submit their entries on the secured online form. Documents should be compressed and uploaded in one file, zip format. Each entry will be named as follows: User Identification Number.zip and should not exceed 200 MB.

Participants must ensure complete anonymity of their submissions. No names, personal or institutional information (including country of origin), logos, signatures or any identifying marks, whether of individuals or architectural firms, may appear on any part of the submitted materials. Any entry revealing such information will be disqualified.

Please Note that:

- After submission is completed, the applicant will receive a confirmation email.
- Following the submission deadline, the competition organizer will be able to download the totality of the ZIP files submitted by the competition participants.
- It will not be possible to modify the submission once it is submitted.
- In case of technical issues, applicants can contact the UIA Secretariat via competitions@uia-architectes.org.

10. Reasons for Disqualification

Factors that will lead to disqualification:

- Entries submitted after the deadline.
- Entries that do not meet eligibility criteria
- Entries that do not respect the conditions for anonymity.
- Entries that violate authors rights of third parties.
- Entries that include deliverables not required by the brief.

Entries that do not meet the requirements set forth in this document or that contain any kind of irregularity shall be indicated to the Jury by the competition Technical Committee. The Jury will decide whether to disqualify the entry, registering the decision in the Report of the Jury Decision.

11. Evaluation

Entries submitted will be examined by the Competition Manager and Technical Committee, to assess their compliance with the submission rules before being formally delivered to the jury at the beginning of the evaluation procedure. The entries will be checked to ensure the following:

- submission of the entry before the deadline.
- compliance with the formal requirements.
- completeness of the requested deliverables and the project presentation.

The jury will be entitled to determine which entries may proceed to the evaluation process.

The jury will view, discuss and evaluate all entries with respect to the evaluation criteria, rank the shortlisted entries and allocate the announced prizes.

Evaluation criteria refer to:

- Presentation of the territorial and social contexts and defining the contribution of the proposed design strategy and methodology
- Innovative design solution/creativity in relation to the specific local context
- Sustainable Solutions (socially, economically and technically)
- Social Engagement/ cultural interactions
- Improvement in the lives of affected citizens
- Feasibility of the proposal
- Originality of the proposed strategy, tactic or design

The jury may refine these criteria as needed during the evaluation process. The order of reference does not mean criteria hierarchy.

12. Jury Decisions

Jury decisions are sovereign, binding both for the organizer and the competitors, irrevocable and unappealable. The submission of an entry implies tacit acceptance by the competitors of all conditions and rules outlined in these regulations and the results of the competition.

13. Copyright/ Authors' Rights

The authors will retain their copyright and right to publish their projects. No design, whether it has received a prize or not, may be used wholly or in part by the competition organizers or third parties without the explicit agreement of its author. By submitting an entry, competitors guarantee that they are the authors of the project and that they do not infringe author rights of third persons.

14. Publication Rights

Competitors give the right to the UIA (including its Working Bodies and Member Sections) to publish the entries for the purpose of promoting the competition and its aims, and for research. They also grant the UIA the right of first publication.

- The UIA may publish the entries on its website, in exhibitions, press releases, social media, publications and other communication platforms. The names of the authors will be mentioned.
- Competitors are not allowed to publish their entry before the announcement of the competition results. Publication prior to the official announcement of the competition results will be grounds for disqualification.
- When publishing the submitted proposal, the competitors must mention the Organiser.

15. Announcement of Winners

All prize winners will be informed by e-mail. The announcement of the result will be published on the UIA website www.uia-architectes.org

16. Awards Ceremony and Exhibition

The jury report documenting the jury's decision and including critiques of the prize-winning projects and honourable mentions will be made available online on the competition website when announcing the results. The Awards Ceremony and the exhibition of the Competition Results shall take place at the UIA 2026 World Congress of Architects in Barcelona, Spain.

17. Legal Aspects and Dispute Resolution

By submitting an entry, participants accept all conditions of the competition, rules outlined in these regulations and decisions of the jury in matters of evaluation. It is not possible to appeal to the court system against the organizer and decisions of the jury. There will not be any arbitration or mediation. Any dispute concerning the competition procedure will serve as experience feedback for future competitions organized by the UIA. Eventual complaints may be addressed to the ICC Secretariat.

PART B: PROGRAMME

1. Overview

In the face of accelerating climate change, environmental degradation, social inequalities, and political instability, architecture is called upon to evolve. No longer limited to building after the fact, the discipline must now embrace a strategic role: anticipating risk, supporting emergency response, and guiding long-term recovery. This expanded responsibility redefines architectural practice and education alike, positioning architecture as a catalyst for resilience and sustainability.

Rooted in the core values of the International Union of Architects (UIA)—social responsibility, cultural sensitivity, and global cooperation—this international ideas’ competition invites young architects to engage with architecture as a tool for strategic action in times of crisis. It reflects the UIA’s mission to support emerging professionals in shaping a more just, inclusive, and sustainable built environment.

2. The Main Topic: Architecture and the Aftermath of Disaster

This edition of the competition focuses on the aftermath of the 2023 earthquake in Morocco, exploring how architecture can respond meaningfully to both the immediate and long-term needs of affected communities. While natural phenomena like earthquakes are often framed as “natural disasters,” their impacts are largely determined by human factors: planning, infrastructure, settlement patterns, and systemic inequalities.

This competition encourages participants to understand disaster not only as a moment of destruction but as part of a broader cycle—before, during, and after a crisis. In this expanded timeframe, architecture becomes a platform for strategic foresight: mitigating vulnerability, preserving memory and identity, and facilitating recovery that leads to greater social, environmental, and cultural resilience.

3. Competition Purpose

The competition invites innovative proposals for architectural interventions that respond to the earthquake’s impacts while envisioning sustainable futures. Participants are encouraged to rethink architectural agency across multiple scales and timeframes—from emergency shelter to territorial planning, from rebuilding local life to reimagining regional networks of care, infrastructure, and exchange.

The aim is not only to rebuild but to redefine:

- How architecture can heal and empower communities.
- How it can preserve vernacular heritage, cultural memory, and place identity.
- And how it can contribute to sustainable economic regeneration, social empowerment and ecological recovery.

Design proposals may vary in scope—from a single building to a complex system of urban and territorial relationships. They may include public facilities (schools, mosques, health centers), housing solutions, mobility and infrastructure proposals, or strategies for landscape resilience and agricultural renewal. Flexibility is encouraged, with participants invited to define their own approach, scale, and focus based on a critical reading of the local context.

4. About the Competition Site: Izlloulen, Atlas Mountains, Morocco

The specific case study for this competition is the village of Izlloulen, located in the Atlas Mountains. Severely affected by the 2023 earthquake, Izlloulen represents a community in urgent need of physical, social, and cultural regeneration. It also embodies a larger condition found in many rural areas: fragile infrastructure, dispersed settlements, rich vernacular heritage, and strong community bonds.

Participants are asked to begin with a thorough analysis of the village's past and present—its spatial organization, cultural identity, economic structure, and architectural typologies. They should identify existing challenges and opportunities and propose design strategies that directly address local needs while offering scalable, transferable models for resilience.

5. Design Scales

Design responses may address one or more of the following scales:

- Territorial scale: connectivity with nearby cities and villages such as Azilal.
- Community scale: strategies for social infrastructure and shared facilities.
- Architectural scale: interventions in housing, public space, or local landmarks.

Participants are encouraged to propose context-sensitive and future-oriented solutions, grounded in an understanding of local realities and aligned with broader global challenges. Architecture, in this sense, becomes a vehicle for transformative change, capable of bridging tradition and innovation, memory and projection, urgency and care.

6. Documents and Administrative Procedures Available on the UIA website

Project documents provided include:

- General Presentation of the site, its context (potential and vulnerabilities) in multiple aspects (geography, infrastructure, social organisation, economy) as well as the specific problematic urban and architectural post-earthquake development.
- Aerial map photo of the site (Izlloulen village).
- Site dwg. File (of Izlloulen central village)

Administrative procedures available online include:

- Registration form
- Submission form