Archetype

International Jury of Leading Architects Selects Winners of Kaira Looro 2026 Competition

Archetype team - 09/07/2026

Winners announced for global humanitarian architecture competition for a Community Centre in rural Senegal

The **Kaira Looro Architecture Competition 2026** has officially announced its winners following a highly international edition that brought together young architects, students, and designers from from 125 countries to propose a **Community Centre for rural southern Senegal**.

Organized by the non-profit organization **Balouo Salo**, the competition has become one of the most recognized global platforms for humanitarian architecture, promoting design as a tool for social impact, education, and community development in vulnerable contexts.

This year's edition challenged participants, to design a multifunctional civic space capable of hosting educational, cultural, and social activities, while ensuring feasibility through **self-construction techniques**, **local materials**, and **low-impact construction strategies** adapted to rural environments in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The competition continues to highlight architecture not only as a technical discipline, but as a direct instrument for improving living conditions and strengthening community identity in underserved regions.

WINNERS OF KAIRA LOORO 2026

The **First Prize** was awarded to **Afroditi Ioannidou and Vladimir Gligorovski from Greece**, receiving a €6,000 cash prize and an internship at **Kengo Kuma & Associates** (Tokyo).

The **Second Prize** was awarded to **Marta Kuczynska and Jakub Czak from Poland**, receiving €2,000 and an internship opportunity at one of the following studios: **Benedetta Tagliabue EMBT (Barcelona), David**

Adjaye Associates (New York), or SBGA | Blengini Ghirardelli (Milan).

The **Third Prize** was awarded to **Karol Eliana Cuellar Narváez, Jhuliana Giraldo, Juan Sebastian Piedrahita, Juan Santiago Uribe, Oscar Valencia from Colombia**, receiving €1,000 and access to the same international internship program.

Additional **Honourable Mentions**, **Special Mentions** and **Finalist** were awarded to projects distinguished for their architectural quality, contextual sensitivity, and innovative approach. Full results are available on the official website. The two Honourable mentions are won by Alexandre Fidèle from Mauritius and Ariane Baillargeon from Canada. All awarded project are available on the official website.

Honourable Mention | Project by Alexandre Fidèle from Mauritius

Project by Ariane Baillargeon from Canada

INTERNATIONAL JURY

The projects were evaluated by an international jury composed of leading figures in contemporary architecture:

Kengo Kuma as Jury President, David Adjaye, Benedetta Tagliabue, Amanda Levete, Manuel Aires Mateus, Mario Cucinella, Giancarlo Mazzanti, Agostino Ghirardelli, Urko Sanchez, Raul Pantaleo, Saad El Kabbaj, Driss Kettani, Emmanuelle Moureaux, and Mohamed Amine Siana, and a scientific committee including international specialist such as Raoul Vecchio, Sebastiano D'Urso, Grazia Nicolosi, Moulaye Diebate and Dario Distefano.

The jury assessed submissions based on **architectural quality, sustainability, contextual integration, and social impact**, reflecting the competition's humanitarian mission.

HUMANITARIAN IMPACT

As in previous editions, **100% of competition proceeds are donated to Balouo Salo's humanitarian projects in Sub-Saharan Africa**, supporting initiatives in education, healthcare, access to clean water, and essential infrastructure.

Several winning projects from previous editions are currently **under construction or nearing completion**, demonstrating the continuity between architectural proposal and real-world implementation.

ABOUT KAIRA LOORO ARCHITECTURE COMPETITION

The **Kaira Looro Architecture Competition** is an international non-profit design competition dedicated to humanitarian architecture in Sub-Saharan Africa. Each edition invites participants to address real social and infrastructural challenges through innovative, context-sensitive architectural proposals.

The competition promotes architecture as a tool for **social transformation, dignity, and sustainable development**, linking global design talent with tangible humanitarian impact through the initiatives of Balouo Salo.

ABOUT BALOUO SALO

Balouo Salo is an international non-profit organization working in Sub-Saharan Africa in the fields of education, healthcare, water access, and community development.

Founded in 2014, the organization implements infrastructure and humanitarian projects aimed at improving living conditions in rural and underserved communities, promoting participatory and sustainable development models. Today, Balouo Salo is recognized globally for its participatory, community-empowered approach, and its interventions have helped improve the lives of over 50,000 people in extremely vulnerable areas.

All activities are supported through international fundraising and awareness campaigns.