

African Architecture Renaissance Seminar & RIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

KIGALI, 28<sup>TH</sup> February - 01<sup>ST</sup> March, 2025

Hosted by the Rwanda Institute of Architects (RIA) & Africa Union of Architects (AUA)

**Theme: "Urban Regeneration and Informal Settlement Upgrading"**

**The Contribution of African Architects: "Analyzing Kigali's Experience"**



**AFRICA UNION OF ARCHITECTS**

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**Concept Note**

## 1.0 EVENT DETAILS

### Theme:

### African Architecture Renaissance Seminar

"Urban Regeneration and Informal Settlement Upgrading"

"Analyzing Kigali's Experience"

**Dates:** 28<sup>TH</sup> February\_1<sup>ST</sup> March, 2025

**Venue:** Ubumwe Grande Hotel, Kigali-Rwanda

### **Organizers:**

Rwanda Institute of Architects (RIA) & Africa Union of Architects (AUA)

## 2.0 BACKGROUND:

The Rwanda Institute of Architects (RIA), in collaboration with the Africa Union of Architects (AUA), is pleased to announce a forthcoming joint event that will address critical issues in urban regeneration and informal settlement upgrades using Kigali's transformative experience as a case study. This event will serve as a dynamic platform for professionals and stakeholders to engage in critical discussions, share insights, and recognize exemplary contributions to the field.

### Theme:

"The Impact of African Architects on Urban Revitalization and Informal Development: will guide the event's agenda, with a focus on innovative solutions, sustainable practices, and collaborative efforts that can shape the future of urban development on the continent.

## 3.0 KEY PARTNERS:

### **Institutions:**

Ministry of Infrastructure (MININFRA), Rwanda Housing Authority (RHA), City of Kigali (CoK)

### **Sponsors:**

Imana Steel, Steel-Rwa, SAFINTRA, LG Rwanda, DSPA

#### 4.0 ACTIVITIES & AWARDS:

A series of events are planned across two days, encompassing a workshop, panel discussions, MoU operationalization, exhibitions, and award ceremonies.

- **Key activities:**

- **An opening workshop** focused on the theme of urban regeneration and informal upgrading.
- **The operationalization of MoUs** involving key partners at the national, regional and continental level, paving the way for concrete actions and shared objectives.
- **The RIA Annual General Assembly (GA)** will provide a forum for reflection on the practice benefits, issues that the profession is facing, Election of new leaders of the Governing council and strategic planning.
- An evening gala dinner where the "**Inclusive Urban Regeneration Award**" will be presented to recognize the collaboration between the **City of Kigali** and its partners on the Urban Development initiatives and distinguished efforts in the pipeline.
- **The awarding ceremony of the top 3 best projects** designers / Students' competition on the Urban regeneration concepts and design of Informal Settlements. Two Key University participated: University of Rwanda and INESS Ruhengeri / Schools of Architecture
- **An exhibition** of local interventions, research and innovative construction materials in the Kigali Car Free Zone.
- **An open discussion on continental cooperation within the architecture industry**, particularly in relation to the African Continental Free Trade Area (**AFCFTA**).
- **The "1000 Hills Architecture Award"** will be presented at the closing gala dinner.

#### 5.0 EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

1. **Strengthened Networks:**

Formation of stronger networks between architects, urban practitioners and developers, fostering cross-border collaboration and sharing of best practices.

2. **Knowledge Dissemination:**

An increased understanding of urban regeneration and informal settlement upgrading strategies, with insights from Kigali's transformation.

3. **Policy Influence:**

The event will provide a forum for influencing and endorsement of policies through the direct involvement of government partners and the operationalization of MoUs. It will contribute to shaping national and regional strategies for sustainable urban development.

4. **Showcasing Innovations:**

The exhibition of local solutions and materials will promote innovative approaches to construction and urban planning, showcasing Rwanda's commitment to sustainable and locally adaptable solutions.

**5. Professional Development:**

Through workshops and panel discussions, architects and planners will gain Continuing Professional Development (CPD) credits and insights into the latest trends, technologies, and methodologies in the field.

**6. Recognition of Excellence:**

The various awards and recognitions, including the "Inclusive Urban Regeneration Award" and the "1000 Hills Architecture Award," will celebrate achievements and incentivize further excellence in the field of architecture and urban development.

**7. Youth Engagement:**

The involvement of architecture students and the recognition of their work will encourage the next generation of architects, ensuring the profession's vitality and relevance.

**8. Continental Economic Growth:**

By discussing the implications of the **AFCFTA** on the architecture industry, the event will spotlight the potential for economic growth and regional trade, energizing the sector.

**9. Increased Visibility:**

The establishment of the AUA Secretariat in Kigali will increase the visibility of the city as a hub for architectural excellence and urban development in Africa.

**10. Sustainable Urban Development Models:**

The case study of Kigali will offer a replicable model for other African cities facing similar urban regeneration and informal settlement upgrading challenges.

**11. Policy and Practice Integration:**

The event will enhance the integration of policy and practice, ensuring that architectural designs and urban developers are responsive to the socio-economic and environmental needs of African cities.

**12. Global Partnerships:**

The involvement of international partners will open up opportunities for global knowledge exchange and potential funding for urban development projects.

**13. Community Impact:**

Urban tours and interactive sessions will highlight the impact of architectural and planning initiatives on local communities, emphasizing the social aspect of urban regeneration.

## 6.0 PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE FEE / SEMINAR:

- **RIA NON-MEMBERS FEE AND AFFILIATES: 125.000 Rwf / 90\$**
- **RIA LICENSED MEMBERS FEE: 50.000 Rwf / 35\$**
- **GRADUATE MEMBERS: 30.000 Rwf / 21\$**
- **STUDENT MEMBERSHIP: 20.000 Rwf / 15\$**

Covering the costs associated with the meeting venues, meeting materials, media coverage, urban tours, and the Golden-Hills Architecture Gala Dinner.

## 7.0 CONCLUSION:

The joint event by **RIA** and **AUA** is set to be a milestone in the architectural landscape of Africa. By bringing together professionals, policymakers, and academics, the event will not only celebrate the progress made in Kigali but also chart a course for future urban development across the continent. With a carefully crafted program and the support of key partners, this event promises to be an enlightening experience that will leave a lasting impact on the participants and the communities they serve.

The event will provide a unique opportunity for all stakeholders involved in urban development and architecture to come together under one roof to discuss, deliberate, and recognize the crucial role of architecture in urban regeneration and the upgrading of informal settlements. The event not only aims to highlight the advancements and innovations in the field but also to set a precedent for future projects and collaborations that can significantly contribute to the development of sustainable cities across Africa.

The gathering will be a testament to the commitment of African architects to creating inclusive, resilient, and sustainable urban environments. It will demonstrate how the profession can lead by example in addressing the challenges of urbanization, while also celebrating the rich architectural heritage and innovative spirit of the continent.

By the end of this event, we anticipate a strengthened network of professionals who are better equipped with the knowledge, strategies, and partnerships required to transform the urban landscapes of Africa in a way that is both culturally sensitive and forward-thinking.

## 8.0 PROVISIONAL AGENDA:

### Day 1:

#### Morning:

- Registration and Welcome Coffee
- Opening Ceremony: Welcome Address by RIA & AUA Representatives
- Keynote Speeches by Dignitaries from MININFRA, City of Kigali, and other key stakeholders
- Networking Break

#### Afternoon:

- Grand Seminar
  - "Reimagining African Cities: Sustainable Innovations and Inclusive Transformations."
  - Panel Discussion: Opportunities and Challenges in continental trade cooperation and the Impact of AFCFTA on the Architecture Industry
  - Interactive Sessions with Bank Representatives, BRD, MINICOM, Industry Experts and developers
- Plenaries on Urban Regeneration and Informal Upgrade Architecture
- Urban Tours: Showcasing Kigali's Regeneration Projects

#### Night:

- Evening networking Event / Golf Course Gathering
- Student Competition Results publication / Online

### Day 2:

#### Morning:

- Breakfast and Networking
- RIA Annual General Assembly (GA) / Election of the members of the Governing Council / Only members in good standing are allowed to attend and vote
- Announcement of Poll Results, Inauguration and introduction of New Governing Council Members

#### Evening:

- Golden-Hills Architecture Gala Dinner:
  - Introduction of the **Newly elected RIA members of the Governing Council**
  - Awarding Ceremony for "**The Inclusive Urban Regeneration Award**" / City of Kigali
  - Presentation of the "**1000 Hills Architecture Award**"
  - Introduction and Recognition of **INES Ruhengeri School of Architecture**
  - Closing Address and Vote of Thanks (**RIA & AUA Council**)
  - Cultural Performances, Entertainment & Dinner