



# Thon Mun Community Centre

## Project Little Dream

### Project name:

Thon Mun Community Centre, Takeo, Cambodia

### Project by:

Project Little Dream

### Names and Roles of Client(s & Partners):

Thon Mun Village Council

### Total Costs:

64,000 USD

### Main Sources of Funding:

Charity foundation sponsorship

### Project Start Date:

Dec 2011

### Project End Date:

Feb 2013

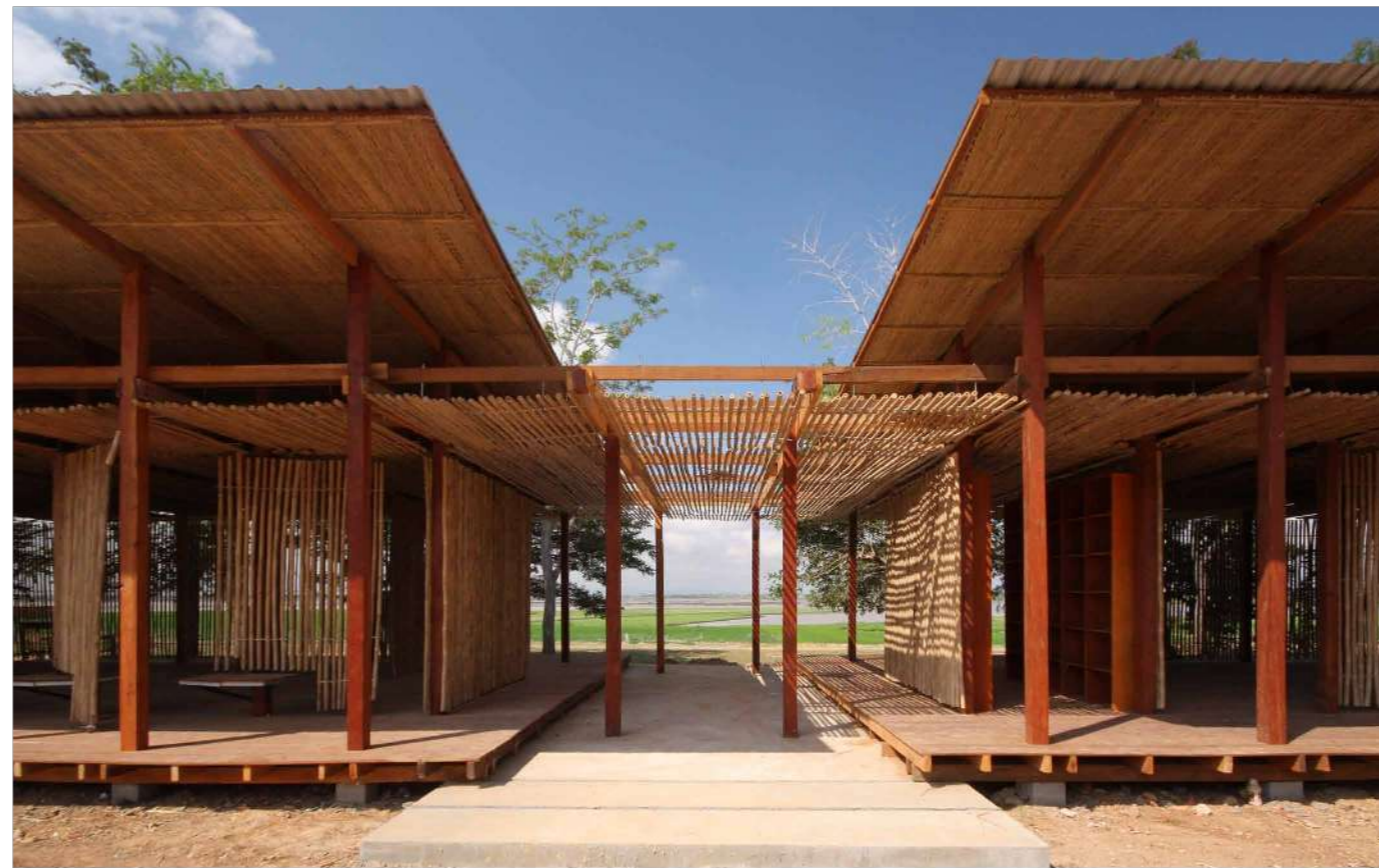
### Project Little Dream

Project Little Dream is a student-run registered charity in 2009 that designs, builds and runs village primary schools in Cambodia. Today, 530 Cambodian children are studying English in the three schools built by Project Little Dream in Prey Run Village, Kh'na Rong Village and Thon Mun Village in Takeo, Cambodia. Each year, more than 60 volunteers from Hong Kong to participate in the education, school-building and healthcare projects that Project Little Dream organises.

### Thon Mun Community Centre

Thon Mun Community Centre provides free classes to children and offers a public gathering place, activating the local pagoda complex into a public arena. With 65 volunteers and local craftsmen the center was completed in two winter phases.

The project is composed of two classrooms on a raised platform, enveloped by a series of porous bamboo screens. The ceiling bamboo screen extends between the two volumes connecting them to create a shaded corridor overlooking a horizon of rice fields. Later in 2013, the sanitation facility was completed with six toilet cubicles and a rain-water harvesting system.



### Bamboo Symphony

Bamboo screens are the defining threshold element in the Thon Mun Community Centre. They envelope both the walls and the ceiling. The bamboo are linked by 2m-long bolts and fixed by nuts, all by the hands of the volunteers. The evenly spaced bamboo materialise the transparency of the community centre with porosity.

### Hasselt Charter 2.

**Foster the socially responsible role of built environment professionals by stimulating social modes of practice before speculative economic profitability;**

The community centre is being built in a public space near the village pagoda, offered by the village council. It encourages anyone who is outside to view the space and has a definitive entrance from the centre portal. The use of bamboo encourages the otherwise growing gated community in Thon Mun Village. Not only does bamboo has a much more sustainable growing cycle than the usual Khmer Ch'teah (Red Hardwood), the installation of the bamboo screen introduces transparency in public schooling facilities.

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### Layers of Time

While maintaining simplicity in form, the gabion wall of the sanitation facilities was built by volunteers who collected the rubble of temples destroyed in the area to fill up wire cages. Facing the flood-prone rice fields, it is a frontier to nature. The wall becomes a metaphorical manifestation of historical strata — standing with nature, reconstructed as the symbol of civility and social cohesion.

### Hasselt Charter 8.

**Support participatory, democratic, multicultural and interdisciplinary processes and approaches in strengthening community solidarity as a factor of rural and urban social development;**

According to the recent General Population Census of Cambodia, the urban — rural population ratio in most regions in Cambodia was skewing towards a predominant rural population. We suggest that a diversification from a predominantly agricultural industry could be an active form of urban design in a village setting. If urbanization is a process through which social mobility is encouraged, education offered in the Community Centre provides an opportunity for individuals living in Thon Mun Village the mobility to enter other industries apart from agriculture.

The gabion wall as a frontier to the rural setting of Thon Mun Village signifies the collective participatory effort both from local villagers and international volunteers.

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### Healthcare Awareness Day

Established in the summer of 2011, the PLD Healthcare Division aims to develop the potential for empowerment through better health in rural villages of Takeo. We value empowerment through education, but as health is the most vital asset of life, investing in healthcare provides a solid foundation for the development of other goals.

Each year, our Healthcare Division identifies the needs of our targeted community by needs-assessments in the summer; they then carry out a year-long campaign that starts in the winter.

### Hasselt Charter 6.

**Share knowledge, promote discussion, reflection and awareness, and collaborate in the advancement of the 'social production of habitat';**

On a normal weekday, the community centre is used as primary school classrooms. But today is our first Health Awareness Day, part of our year-long healthcare campaign SHIELD in Thon Mun Village. We have turned the bamboo structure into a community-gathering place where games, fly-trap classes, and body check-ups take place. They are all activities that aim to deliver basic healthcare knowledge, such as dietary habits, sanitary practices, basic first aid skills, and dental awareness. Once they complete the games, participants are given a stamp and upon collection of all of the stamps, they are offered a simple sanitary pack. In parallel, we also invite the Takeo Eye Hospital, a local NGO, to organise eye-checks for the elderly residents.

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