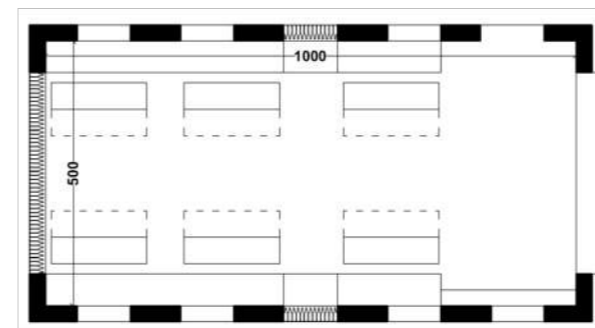
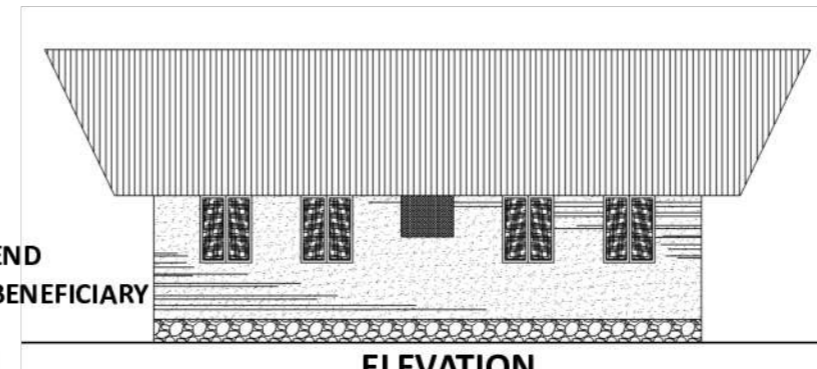
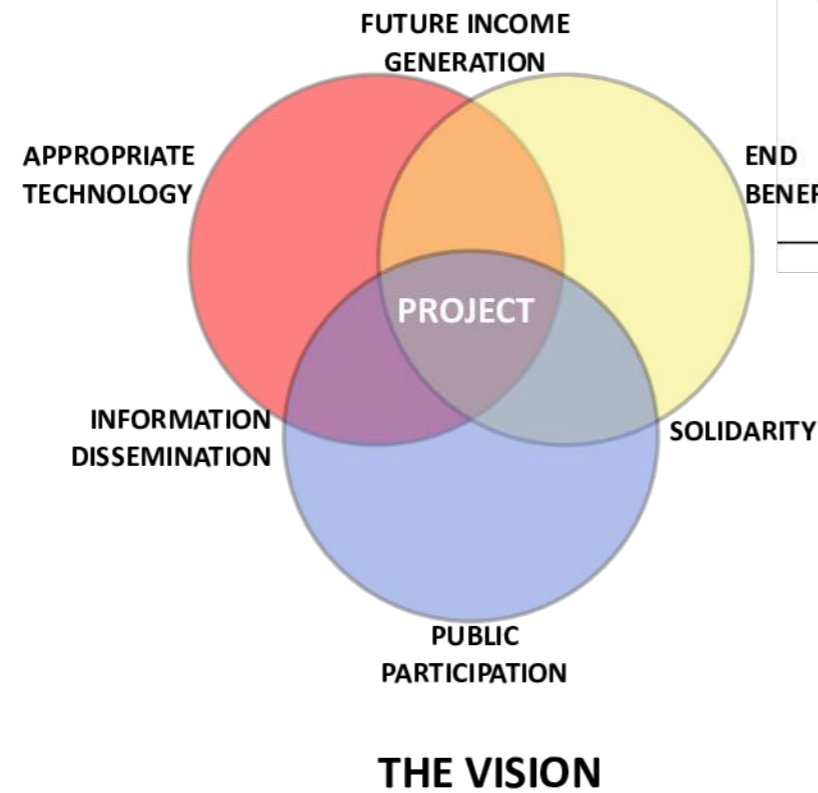




ACTIVITY CENTER UNDER CONSTRUCTION NEXT TO THE EXISTING CHILLA FACILITY WITH FEW KIDS AND STAFF FROM CHILLA



Introduction 1/4

Ongoing Construction Of An Activity Center For Kids of Chilla.

Location : Karakulam, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India.
 Client : Chilla - An initiative of ANANNIA.
 Total Cost : 45,000 INR (Aprox. 700 EUR)
 Main Source of Funding : No direct funding. Voluntary participation in construction.
 Project Start : 2012
 Project End : Ongoing

Chilla is a social responsibility project of ANANNIA aiming at providing home for the children of sex workers – an initiative to give these children a fair chance to live and be connected with their mothers. Their current premises is not big enough to accommodate the growing number of kids they are catering to. Thus ANANNIA approached ASF-India for helping them in constructing an extension for their current premises.

Chilla dont have any funding for the extension. We designed the building in consultation with the kids and staff at Chilla. Estimates were prepared but fund-raising was not successful. After spending almost a year looking for funds, we decided to take voluntary participation from public for construction.

The Vision

Our aim was to combine three prime factors viz. Appropriate technologies, Public Participation and End beneficiaries together in such a manner that not only all three factors combine to form the core of the project but also each of the factors combines with other to have its own effect.

General public started volunteering for construction using non-conventional and Eco-friendly technologies which started spreading awareness among them. They were able to get hands-on experience which helped them in developing confidence in these technologies. We hope that many of them will go ahead and try these techniques in future.

When general public started volunteering for Kids from Chilla, their outlook towards these kids changed. They started accepting these kids more openly. The social ties between public and these kids strengthened.

During the course of workshops along with the building all necessary tools and equipment was ready. Couple of Chilla inmates who are in their young age had participated in the workshops actively. With all the tools and equipment ready, they have an option to build their own team and make their career in these alternate technologies.



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"Defend, promote and enable access to adequate and dignified habitat for all as a 'Fundamental Human Right'."

ANANNIA (An Invitation for New Initiatives) is an NGO with a vision to promote new initiatives in the community, to strive for a better society and to be with the marginalized sections of society as a group of responsible fellow humans, helping them to reintegrate with the mainstream society overcoming stigma and discrimination.

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NEED FOR THE PROJECT

The children of CHILLA currently reside in a space which does not cater to all their needs. They lack proper facilities to study, play and sleep. Therefore, CHILLA approached ASF-India with the need of having a permanent dwelling and activity space for their children. ASF-India has always upheld social responsibility and ethical practice. We saw in CHILLA an opportunity to work with a group that is budding with ideas and aspiration for a decent and rightful life. The project was challenging with its financial constraints but heart-warming to be working for our young clients. We found in the project an opportunity to work for a social cause.

As professionals engaged in studying, analyzing and practicing built environment, ASF-India envisaged for a multi functional utility for the proposed space at CHILLA. The space therefore should address the need of the children and their kind of activities. The basic program included study spaces, common space for group activity, meetings, library and sleeping facilities.

The primary concern of the project was to procure land. The NGO, willingly offered a small patch of land adjacent to their existing building at Karakulam. However, financing the project became a concern. The preliminary site visit gave us an idea about the building technology we might want to use – rich laterite soil gave out clues about the possible construction technology. Since there weren't any key sponsors for the project, we had to rely on floating funds and part contributions all through the project.



"IF YOU CAN DREAM IT, YOU CAN DO IT"

CHILLA FAMILY



EXISTING DINING ROOM



Part of the building was renovated and converted into girls accomodation.



EXISTING CHILLA:
Single computer for all the kids



Partly damaged old building converted into accomodation for boys.



CELEBRATIONS AT CHILLA:
Flower arrangement as part of onam celebrations



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"Facilitate the use of appropriate technologies, materials and labour adequate to local values, to the cultural specificity and responsive to the natural environment"

Lack of direct funding made us take a participatory approach where volunteers, students, professionals and the end beneficiaries were the labor force for construction. The construction technology had to be simple enough for the unskilled participants to manage. Also there were no funds for purchasing conventional raw materials and we had to look for materials from site. Soil was abundantly available on site and we decided to go for mud walls. Out of various methods of mud construction, rammed-earth was the most suitable option as the process is simple and a single block of wall can be completed in a day or two. It was ideal for workshops where participants could experience the whole process within the duration of workshop.

Since more than 1000 participants were expected to build this structure collectively, it was a great opportunity to expose these participants to other non-conventional ecofriendly construction techniques. We decided to build some walls using used-plastic bottles filled with soil and used glass bottles to create awareness among participants regarding how materials can be recycled and reused in construction.

Purchase of roofing materials was the next hurdle. We approached the forest department of Kerala and they allowed us to cut bamboo directly from the forest on paying a basic price for the bamboo. We decided to construct the complete roof using bamboo framework and bamboo shingles. Again the participants were able to learn age old construction techniques using Bamboo.

APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGIES

Three main technologies were used for construction.

Rammed Earth construction : The soil type on site, was found appropriate for a rammed earth construction. Rammed earth is easy to construct, with semi-skilled labour and at a much faster rate, when compared to conventional techniques. The labour intensive aspect of this technique inspired ASF-India to have a participatory approach in execution.

Bamboo roofing: Bamboo is traditionally used for building construction in rural pockets of Kerala. Ready availability, climate responsiveness and cost effectiveness of bamboo were an added advantage. ASF-India also has an expertise in bamboo technology with many of its members engaged in bamboo construction practices.

Reuse of bottles One of the key issues in Kerala, is management of waste. Both glass and plastic bottles create havoc in the city of Trivandrum which has failed to enforce an efficient system of waste management. Reuse of bottles in this project was an attempt to spread awareness on alternate approaches on solving waste management in the city of Trivandrum.



SAMPLE OF PROPOSED BAMBOO SHINGLE ROOF



BOTTLE WALL USING BEER BOTTLES



RAMMED EARTH WALLS & BOTTLE WALL WITH USED PLASTIC BOTTLES



SAMPLE WINDOW SHUTTLER WITH BAMBOO

"ALL FINE ARCHITECTURAL VALUES ARE HUMAN VALUES, ELSE NOT VALUABLE"



RAMMED EARTH CONSTRUCTION



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"Do small things with great love"

Volunteers seiving the soil with the help of one beneficiary. It is an important part in the construction of rammed earth walls since presence of stone pieces can affect the strength of the walls.



"Make things happen"

Volunteers cutting bamboo necessary for making Bamboo Shingles for the roofing of the rammed earth building.

"WE RISE BY LIFTING OTHERS"



Hasselt Charter Principle 8

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

End beneficiaries who are the staff and children from CHILLA were working with us from the conceptual stage itself. We had healthy debates and discussion related to their requirements, spatial planning, aesthetics, construction techniques and so on. The process had already created a sense of belonging among the beneficiaries, but when they realized that volunteers from different parts of city are coming together to work on site and construct their dream shelter, they started feeling more accepted among the community.

Volunteers from various schools and colleges were joining the efforts. We created time slots for site work to distribute volunteers evenly. Work was categorized according to difficulty level and volunteers were allowed to choose the kind of work they can manage to do.

Though this approach of constructing a building with the help of volunteer evolved due to lack of direct funding, it had several other positive aspects. Almost all the 600 volunteers got hands-on experience in various environment friendly construction techniques. Their approach towards construction workers changed as they realized how physically exhausting construction work is and most importantly they started treating the children from CHILLA without any prejudice.



"One person can make a difference and everyone should try"

ASF-INDIA member guiding volunteers in rammed earth construction.



"To serve is beautiful"

A group of volunteers digging soil for rammed earth walls and another group stacking earth filled bottles as a part of reusing plastic bottles.

"Be the reason someone smiles today"

One of the beneficiary posing next the rammed-earth wall constructed by volunteers. It was a joy watching them learning things by involving in the construction activities



For the successful realization of any community based project, beneficiary involvement is a key factor. Keeping this in mind, right from the conception stage itself, ASF- India had a clear vision of engaging in participatory approaches. Such an approach, created a sense of belonging among the beneficiaries, as well as, generates a sense of potential role, this space could play in their lives.

As part of the National Service Scheme, students from schools and colleges within the city were involved in the project at various stages. We conducted workshops in various interdisciplinary sessions for interested students. These sessions included construction activities at Chilla, classes on appropriate technologies for construction and talks on socially relevant issues such as human rights and sexuality.

This attempt, believe can motivate the younger generation to realize the value of participatory approaches and promote such initiatives in their future life, encouraging them to be socially responsible human beings.

"WE SHAPE OUR BUILDINGS, THEREAFTER THEY SHAPE US"



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