



CAN

COMMUNITY
ARCHITECTS
NETWORK

NEWSLETTER

April 2015



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A woman with dark hair, wearing a blue turtleneck, is smiling and holding a small, green, two-story model house on a white stand. The background shows a brick wall and some greenery.

Craftmanship in architecture

We have come to the third issue of the CAN newsletter. Without intentionally creating a theme, unexpectedly a large number of stories arrived sharing on the role of craftsmanship in architecture at the scale of the household, and also the city. A week-long heritage conservation workshop hosted by friends in Kathmandu, and a heritage tour launched by friends in Yogyakarta, both place the artisans themselves as the main actors in the upgrading process producing a form of “living heritage”. Young professional supported by the Perween Rahman Fellowship in Vietnam experiment with using compressed soil bricks as a low-cost alternative to concrete, while our friends from Hunnarshala, India share on their recent progress with rammed earth construction, and a new housing project for the homeless in Bangkok gives the space for residents to be the artisans of their own unit. The Siamese Association of architects has also decided to dedicate a public seminar to artisan-architects working, designing, and building with bamboo, rammed earth, and wood.

Hope you enjoy reading this collection of inspiring stories, please share with others, and please share other stories with us.

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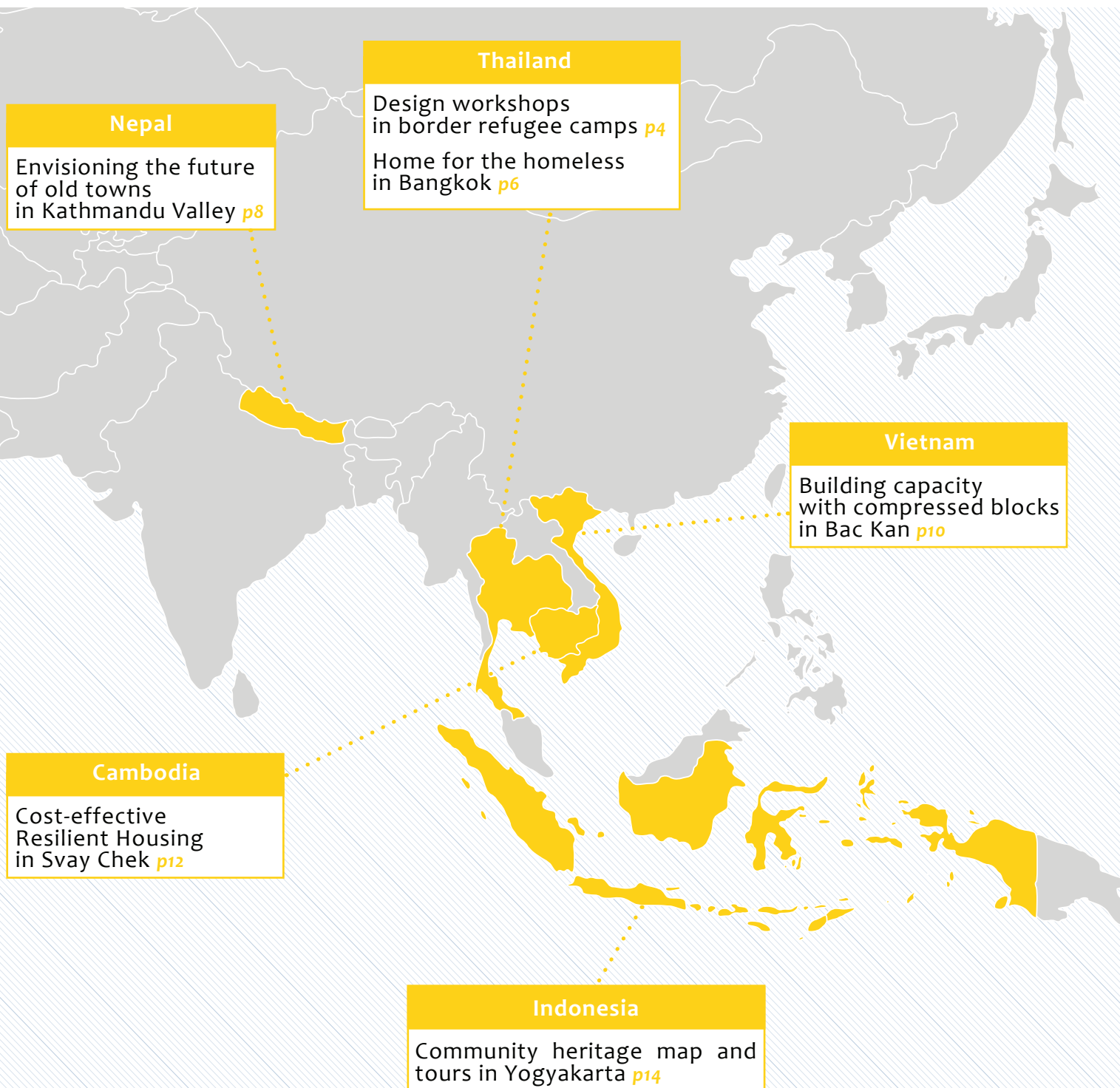
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For contributions, comments, or queries,
write at communityarchitects.news@gmail.com

For more information about the network, visit the
website: communityarchitectsnetwork.info

Thanks to all those who contributed their stories,
pictures and experiences for this issue!

WHAT'S GOING ON AROUND ASIA:



Thailand/Myanmar

Design workshops in border refugee camps



Thailand has been the host of refugees fleeing conflict in Myanmar since the mid 1980s. Approximately 120,000 people currently live in 9 camps along the Thailand-Myanmar border, with each camp ranging in population from around 2000 to 50,000 people. Recent progress towards a Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement in Myanmar has greatly increased the prospect of voluntary repatriation of these refugees. However, at present, key stakeholders agree that conditions are not yet right for return.

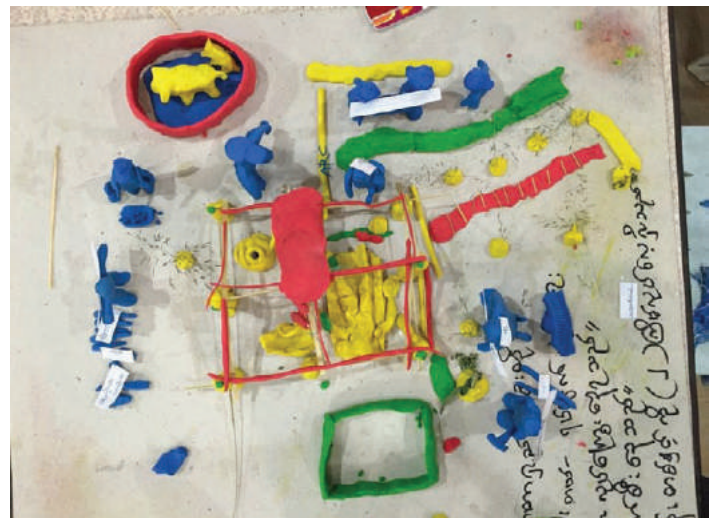


In the past building materials were distributed annually to refugees in the camps, including bamboo, eucalyptus poles and roofing material. However, with rising prices and a reduction in budget, systems of assessment and collective decision making have been put into place for need-based distribution.

Openspace was invited by The Border Consortium (TBC) to carry out capacity building workshops with the camps' shelter staff as part of their Shelter and Settlement's Preparedness program. The overall objective of TBC is to strengthen settlement governance, leadership, and self-reliance with working groups, which can gradually lead towards transitioning of housing responsibilities over to the refugee communities themselves.



Openspace was invited to carry out workshops to strengthen governance and leadership, as well as self-reliance, that can gradually lead towards transitioning of housing responsibilities over to refugee communities



The main objective of the 2-day workshop was to strengthen understanding on assessing vulnerability, analyzing key challenges, identifying available resources and opportunities, as well as putting forward proposed actions to be taken.

The workshop started off with open discussions around what vulnerability means and what can make an individual or a household more vulnerable than others. This was then followed by discussions on the type of information to be collected and methods of data collection. Each team was then provided with a 'case study' household to visit and collect information.

The workshop used color-coded plasticine as the primary means of communication and representation. One color at a time is introduced to the participants. In this case yellow forms the base of the story - the context, the existing; green was used to highlight challenges and obstacles; blue/purple was used to represent available resources and opportunities; and red was provided last for the teams to create their 'proposals'.

The teams were encouraged to explore and consider different possible solutions that use existing resources to reduce or remove some of the key challenges. For example: an elderly lady with difficulties of movement due to bad knees or back will find uneven or steep path to toilet a challenge. The solution can be to improve the quality of the path itself, install handrails, or provide her with a walking stick - any

of these solutions can work, depending on resources and other contributing factors.

The teams then presented their 'case study' household, from context to challenges, to resources, and proposed solutions. Other teams were invited to ask questions and provide inputs after each presentation. As all architects are aware of, the first jury/crit is no easy walk in the park - and we certainly gave them a taste of it!

This is the second workshop since 2013 Openspace has facilitated for TBC, the willingness to learn and open-mindedness of the refugee people makes our job easy, and we enjoy exploring Karen cooking in the camps!

Most of the feedback we received has been appreciation for taking the time to explore the subjectivity of 'vulnerability' in detail prior to delivering 'solutions' rather than ticking boxes on assessment forms. I hope that we have provided them with new tools to approach obstacles and challenges that they will face in the future. And we wish best of luck on their onward journeys when the time comes.

| Wan Sophonpanich

For more information contact Wan
at wan@thingsmatter.com



Thailand Home for the homeless in Bangkok

Thailand Homeless Network was set up in 2001, and it has since been working on many issues to improve the homeless lives, such as rights to access basic welfare, healthcare assistance, and temporary shelter. The Homeless Network built and run a homeless centre in Talingchan district, Bangkok, with funds from the government, where people previously living on the street share the living space. Here they started developing a sense of community, of home. They cook together, take care of pets. The next step, 15 years after the network's inception, is to build a proper house and to create a mechanism for homeless people to access housing. This is the first housing project in Thailand. The project is currently under construction in Bangkok, not too far from the homeless centre.

Thailand's "4 Regions Slum Network" found the land, a 30-year lease from the State Railway of Thailand, nearby other Baan Mankong communities. Homeless people could register as a Baan Mankong community, but due to their very low income and inconsistent savings, they couldn't apply for a loan. So the project draws on many other different resources: a grant for infrastructures from CODI; some

funds from ACCA; money from Thai cement giant SCG (part of its corporate social responsibility project); and the Thai Health Foundation which also supported the Community Architects' work.

At first, when it was all just an idea, many households wanted to join, around 40. But as the project got more demanding, implying serious savings and planning, many dropped out. Currently 16 households are engaged in the project. The community layout has two different types of housing. There are 8 single houses, good for families who desire privacy and propriety to pass on to their children in future and who are willing to take on the burden of a long-time payback, and a shared house with 8 rooms with toilet, for people who have no family, but want to live in a community where they have good relationships.

During the design phase, while estimating the costs, people wanted to pay less and less. Eventually it was agreed that the common facilities and housing structures will be built first, and house owners themselves will complete the construction with the materials available, allowing for alternative materials to reduce construction costs.



Thailand's
Homeless
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proper house



Initially the idea was that community people would carry out the construction themselves, after receiving some training. But this proved to be very difficult and time-consuming. After many months, the quality of the work was still disappointing and we even had to destroy the foundations and rebuild them. Then we decided to hire community builders from other Baan Mankong communities, as contractors, leading the work; the homeless could join in to help if they wished.

As land and funds are scarce, and people are already used to share a lot in the Homeless Centre, the design reduced individual living space, prioritizing common spaces. There is a large common area and a community center, for the residents to spend time and rest together, including a fish pond and vegetable garden inspired by learnings from the 4 Region Slum Network on self-sustainable food production. Many workshops have been organised on the use of alternative materials, including mud, to expand on people's capacity and skills, and to help build the homeless community in a more uniformed way.

One of the community members, Mr. Eid, said: "It's not easy to get the homeless to build a community together, as each person and their responsibilities is so different. At first we hoped the community would finish their rooms soon, but the truth is the process is very long. I have to wait for friends to build, or we don't have time to spare because we have commitments to our other homeless fellows, we can't forget our duty to help other homeless. Even though there are many problems in the process, we solve them when they arise, and learn from them, so hopefully it will be easier for the next homeless group to make their community.

I have come this far thanks to the Homeless Network, I

**"I own a home,
but I wish it to
be the core of
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I dreamed about
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don't have a wife, I don't have a child, one day when I die I will give my house and everything to the network. When I lived my life on the street I was despised many times for being homeless. I do not want to live in a society where people look at me in that way, I want to live in an environment where people in the community know I'm feeling well, with people who have had the same experience.

I hope that when I get the house, it gives me the opportunity to give a helping hand to homeless people even more. Many people from my village cannot access the welfare programs because they aren't registered in the census, but with my house they can register. I own a home, but I wish it to be the core of the brethren, of homeless people. I dreamed about it and I will do it as long as I have energy, I will solve any problem, I have been through the lowest point of my life, I was bad before, but now I realized it, ahead will be better and better. That's it."

| Thanawin Wijitporn

For more information write to **Net**
at thanawin.net@gmail.com





Nepal Envisioning the future of old towns in Kathmandu Valley

A week long workshop on “Envisioning Future of Old Towns: The people’s way” (23rd-29th March, 2015) concluded in Kathmandu highlighting the essentiality of conservation and promotion of traditional culture and heritage within city redevelopment. The workshop was organized by **Lumanti Support Group for Shelter**, in partnership with **Community Women Forum** (CWF) with support from **ACHR** and **CAN** with the aim to bring communities in different peri-urban communities in Kathmandu together and think collectively on their status as old heritage towns. The workshop provided an opportunity for architects, designers and planners to participate in community processes on the ground, as well as creating a platform for the communities to establish a partnership with the National government.

National and international young architects, together with community people representing 10 peri-urban cities from Kathmandu, Lumanti members and the Community Womens Forum participated in the workshop. CAN representatives shared their experiences on participatory city planning, giving the participants incentive and ideas on how to develop city proposals. More than 60 community members from Tokha, Khokana, Panga, Machhegaon, Thankot, Thecho, Chyasal, Inaya Tole, Thaiba and Sano Gaon areas participated in the workshop. 16 young architects from Nepal

also participated, supporting the community members in the mapping process. For the workshop one group was assembled per town, and local people discussed together with the youth architects on the traditional culture, heritage and monuments in the respective areas, identifying issues, challenges and opportunities to the cities.

The peri-urban cities of Thecho, Sanogaon and Thankot were selected for site visits, in which the youth team of architects and the community people learnt about the existing status of culture and heritage and were exposed to the initiatives underway in preserving their traditional culture and heritage.

The architects team together with the people in Machhegaon developed a short-term, mid-term and long-term plan for the conservation of the traditional culture and heritage monuments



Machhegaon settlement was chosen as the prime focus of the workshop, a settlement of 800 households with the historically important temple of Machhe Narayan. During the workshop extensive field visits and mapping of the issues were conducted in Machhegaon to help target places and proposals for heritage conservation. Three main issues were mapped out: 1. Encroachment and privatization of public spaces and heritage structures, 2. Conservation and revival of water body in Machhe Narayan Temple, 3. Waste management and infrastructure development. The architect team together with the people of Machhegaon community identified in detail challenges and opportunities of the culture and heritage in Machhegaon as well as developing a short-term, mid-term and long-term plan for the conservation of the traditional culture and heritage monuments in Machhegaon. Community representatives presented the results of the workshop during the closing ceremony to all the participants and select members from the government.

The department of Urban Development and Building Construction, a national government agency responsible for urban issues, have shown interest to support the proposals put forward by the community members in Machhegaon. This is definitely a new beginning, a way forward for linking the communities in urban communities with the National government. Bishnu Devi Womens Cooperative of Machhegaon (a savings group network) played a key role in organizing the workshop in Machhegaon, and the women in the community will take a lead role in following up of the activities after the workshop. | **Lumanti Joshi**

See **Lumanti's website** for more information.

▷ Student architects together with community members identifying traditional culture, heritage and monuments in katmandu.

▽ Depiction of the problems and opportunities facing heritage preservation in Machhegaon.

▽ Women community leaders from Machhegaon cooperative.





Vietnam

Capacity building with compressed blocks in Bac Kan

In 2014 the cost of construction materials doubled in Vietnam, and the cost of concrete blocks, the most common building material for low-cost housing tripled. SELAVIP calculates that the minimum 20million VND (nearly \$USD1000) needed to build a house in 2013 is no longer affordable to low-income people.

Bac Kan is a hill town with an abundance of hill soil in the local area as well as bamboo and acacia trees. A traditional mixture of bamboo wattles and soil is a popular building material for poor households, however it is not very solid. Inspired by the use of compressed earth bricks by Nab.Arc architects to build a school in Muong Te district, Young Professionals Le Nhu Nga and Pham Tuan Anh, with local community builders Nguyen Truong Tam and Mrs. Hue applied for CAN's **Perween Rahman Fellowship** to experiment with compressed blocks as an alternative low-cost building material to concrete blocks in Bac Kan town.

As the soil type is very different between Bac Kan and Muong Te districts, the first thing we did was bring a sample of the Bac Kan hill soil to Nab.Arc architects to discuss if using compressed blocks in Bac Kan was possible. They recommended feasibility testing of the earth-brick material for hardness level and resistance.

In September with the woman union and local builders we held a workshop to test the hardness and resistance of six different earth-brick mixtures. For the mixtures we

experimented with the use of rough versus clean hill soil, rubble or no rubble, and the ratio of cement to soil and let the bricks to cure for two weeks. We tested the cured samples against bricks we'd brought back from Nab.Arc; to test for hardness we used a hammer to beat the bricks, and to test for resistance we soaked the bricks in water for a week. The result was that our bricks were just as strong as Nab.Arc bricks.

In the past many of the community used a mixture of straw and brick to build their houses, but are now more comfortable with concrete, so confessed they were not ready to switch to earth-bricks. In a consultation session with technology professors, engineers and builders they expressed a machine was necessary to reach the minimum

Vietnamese young professionals experimented with compressed blocks as an alternative low-cost building material, testing the hardness and resistance of six different earth-brick mixtures



pressure, and that the bricks can only be used to build a one storey house, and cannot be exposed to too much water, so require an overhanging roof.

In November we purchase the CETA-RAM block press. The CETA-RAM is a manually operated block press, developed by Roberto Lou Ma specifically for the production of low cost hollow soil-cement building blocks following the Guatemalan Earthquake in 1976. However we found the block produced is too heavy for Vietnamese physique, so changed the features such that the size of the brick smaller, with a dovetail like lego bricks so the assembling is easier. The altered CETA-RAM block press can now produce 2 bricks at one time instead of one.

In December we started pressing bricks in Huyen Tung commune with great success, the community people were very happy with the bricks out of a more professional press, and we have started building a test wall with the earthbricks.

Future actions :

1. Now we plan to organize meeting in Huyen Tun commune to choose pilot houses to build using the bricks
2. Young Professionals, with Commune Youth Union, will build the pilot house and calculate the real cost per house.
3. We are organizing a workshop to share and promote the new low-cost building material, targeting those who need to improve, or build their homes but can not afford concrete bricks. | [Nhu Nga](#)

Visit the project's [facebook page](#) for more information.



Cost-effective Resilient Housing:

a community-based approach in Svay Chek



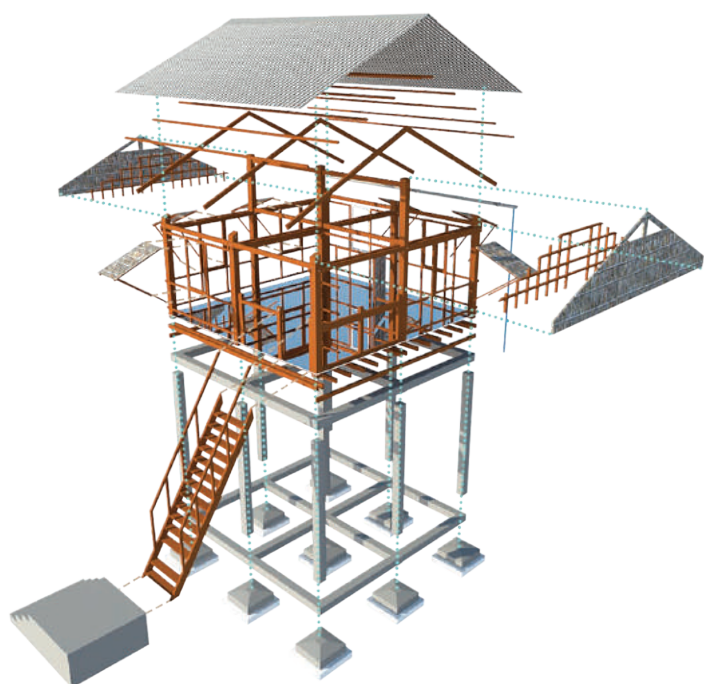
In October 2013 Cambodia was hit by cyclones Wutip and Nari, causing heavy flooding across the whole country. In response UN-Habitat and Malteser International made an agreement to provide shelter recovery assistance in the form of participatory design and rebuilding assistance for the communities most severely hit by the disasters. The **Community Development Foundation** was invited by **UN-Habitat Cambodia** to facilitate in participatory design for resilient shelter and implementation of low-cost cyclone-proof housing in 2 villages exposed to cyclones, Svay Chek

CAN-CAM's community architects facilitated participatory design and implementation of low-cost cyclone-proof housing in two villages



and Ta Ngea, in Siem Reap and Battambang provinces.

In preparation for the design process the **Community Architects Network of Cambodia (CAN-Cam)** conducted preliminary land-use, hazard exposure and impact mapping of the area, as well as a needs assessment in the beneficiary



villages, and established a Community Construction Committee which would oversee the implementation of the project. In addition to cyclone exposure, during the monsoon season Siem Reap province is subject to heavy flooding, impacting the health and livelihoods of fisherman and farmers greatly, so the need to decrease water-related illnesses and preserve livelihoods was also an objective in addition to identifying low-cost building materials, alternative land use options and resilient housing design. CDF/CAN-Cam design team worked with volunteer participants from the communities and students from Cambodian Mekong University, Norton University and the Royal University of Fine Art.

Preliminary design ideas: in the first design workshop, we explored preliminary design ideas. We organised a role play exercise, for members of the community to make models and drawings of their own flood- and cyclone-friendly dream houses. The exercise was beneficial because it revealed important information about the existing conditions, such as flood heights, exposure and impact, local architectural styles and design solutions, landscaping, as well as technical ideas to reduce the impact of flooding and wind. We took the preliminary design ideas to technical advisers at UN-Habitat Cambodia to develop and redefine the shelter prototype.

Materials and technical detailing: the second design workshop focused on the prototype details, starting with an availability survey of local materials. We presented back to the community our defined prototype of resilient housing design for feedback, and developed the technical detailing further based on results of the survey and skills available in the community.

Technique and implementation: in the third workshop we translated the housing design back to Svay Chek village, and began construction training and participatory cost budgeting with communities and local builders. To communicate the technical detailing of the prototype shelter, The CAN-Cam team designed a poster using simple drawings to break down the design in basic elements. Previously Svay Chek village had formed a savings group, but overtime as the condition of the neighbourhood deteriorated, residents developed mistrust and started to drop out. When the cyclone hit, the savings group was finally cancelled. However, thanks to a role play exercise within the training workshop, a nearby community in the district, part of CDF's network, was able to share convincingly the benefit of savings groups on the village, and persuade the Svay Chek community to reestablish their savings groups.

It was agreed that each community was responsible for monitoring the construction process and financial management themselves, with support by CAN-Cam. After the construction cost estimates were ready, negotiations were held between the builders and bulk material suppliers, and bank transfers of the grant instalments could begin.

| CAN-CAM





Kotagede, in Yogyakarta, is one of the oldest walled cities in Java, and also known as the “Silver City” of the 16th Century Moslem Mataram Kingdom. The architecture of Kotagede reflects indigenous Javanese culture mixed with a combination of Islamic and Dutch colonial architecture. In the Java-based Islamic cosmology of Catur Gatra Tunggal, the city is divided into 4 adjoining ‘rooms’: the palace, the mosque, the square and the market.

The mosque is still used regularly by local people, and the cemetery has become a tourist destination. However the living heritage of silver artisans is declining. Arkomjogja recently started using mapping as a tool to discover and document the existing heritage in Kotagede, and found since the financial crisis in the 90’s, and the May 2006 earthquake which destroyed tan-

gible and intangible assets, social capital has been severely weakened. Only 25 silversmiths still work today.

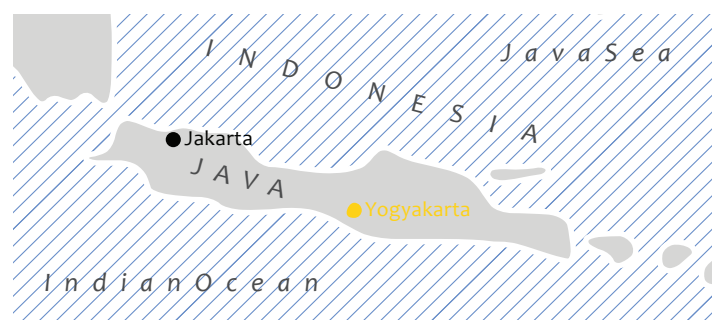
Since 2013 the Airasia Foundation has supported Arkomjogja in working with Kampung Jagalan’s youth to initiate a community-based Kampung Heritage Conservation Project in Jagalan Kotagede. The conservation project combines the resources of community groups and tourism business actors to help realise Kotagede’s ‘market value’ in the context of cultural tourism, and develop heritage tourism potential in Indonesia.

The community has been able to use the maps as material to start historical tourism in Kotagede. The launch tour will be on the 29th of March. Besides community mapping, Arkomjogja has also facilitated the local youth in several sketching events with architecture students to document the existing heritage buildings for illustration material within the maps.

Kampung Jagalan community has been able to use maps as material to start historical tourism in Kotagede, one of Java’s oldest walled towns, the “Silver City” of 16th century Mataram Kingdom



△ Kotagede silversmiths use filigree, a delicate method that uses twisted threads of silver which are soldered together in a specific design motif.



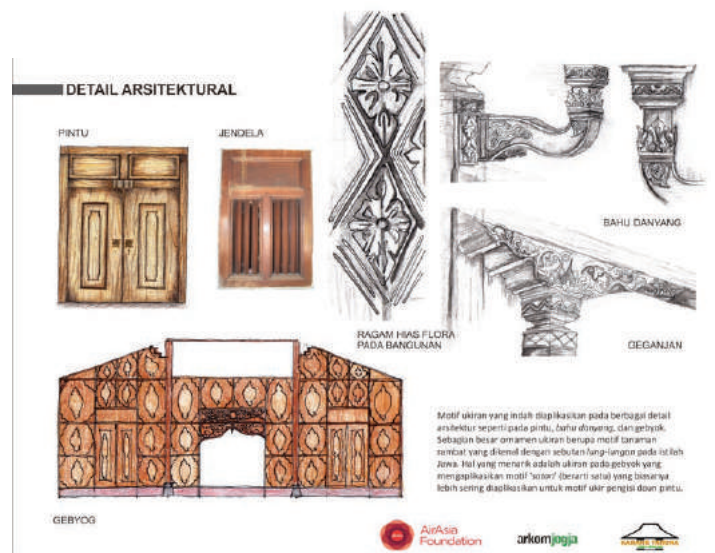
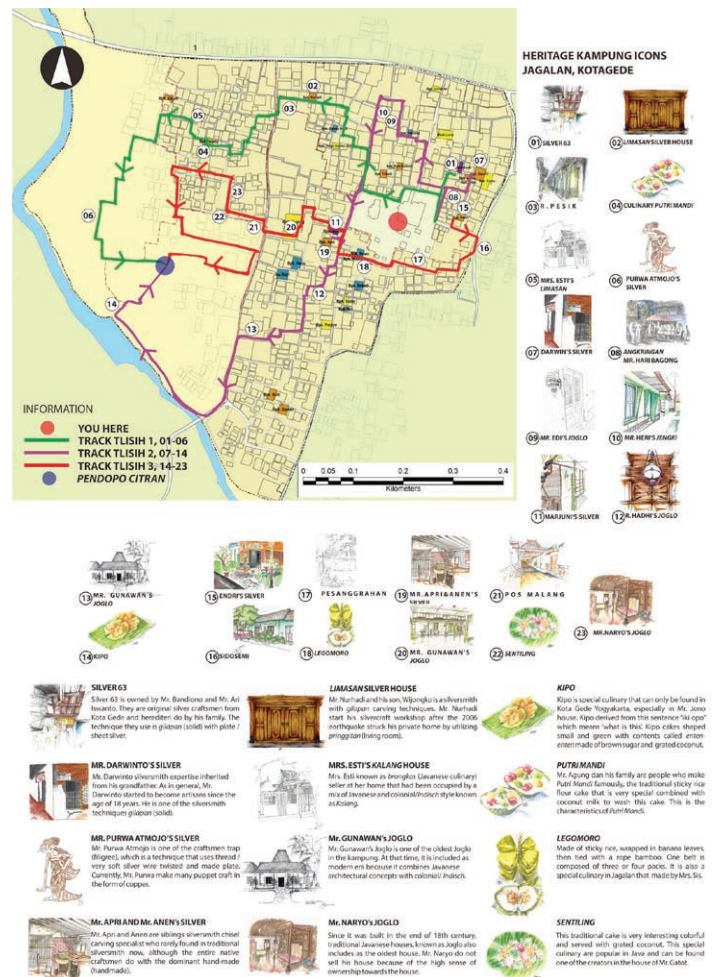
Indonesia

Community heritage map and tours in Kotagede, Yogyakarta

Since encouraging the silversmiths to work as a collective they have become inspired to rebuild the Kotagede silverworks. 20 local silversmith participated in the Jagalan Silversmith's Workshop put on by Airasia Foundation, the British Council, and Ultra Indigo Yogyakarta, focused on marketing and innovation design at Kotagede, involving Jagalan's Youth and Arkomjogja. Unique crafts were produced intended to be developed with social entrepreneurship in the future.

Thanks to the superb reviews in Kota Gede (<http://bit.ly/1yM3R1R>), ARKOM has been invited again by AirAsia to develop the heritage village of Bena in Flores as a community and coffee tourism spot. | **Mayang Nayoan**

▽ Adhi Penna, one of the community youth, leads the tour of Jagalan village.



Thailand

Forthcoming events by Community Act Network

Handmade Architecture is the name of the upcoming public seminar hosted by the **Association of Siamese Architects (ASA)**, responding to the rise of artisan architects working, designing, and building with bamboo, rammed earth, and wood. To learn from these emerging architectural firms, **CAN Thailand** is organising its annual participatory design workshop in conjunction with the ASA seminar for the first time, to discuss with a wider audience the current practice and the future of this handmade architecture.

The annual CAN Thailand workshop gives architectural students around Thailand an opportunity to get exposed to, and work with community architects. This year Ploy and Batan from **Openspace** studio, invited architects and landscape architects from two leading professional firms based in Bangkok, **Apostrophys** and **Openbox**.

This year the design workshop will focus on strategies for revitalising Chatchai market, a traditional market built in 1926 when King Rama VII stayed at the royal palace in Huahin city. Aside from its history, the building has a unique roof design composed of 7 consecutive curves symbolising

its construction during the reign of King Rama VII. Although since then Huahin city has become a popular tourist spots, people have forgotten this once famous market, the structure is neglected and the second floor now vacant. The municipal office of Huahin is interested to renovate this building as a part of Huahin city development plan, however have limited ideas on how to transform it. In collaboration with CAN and partners, and with participation of local actors and the municipality's support, the 2-week workshop in June aims to explore and visualise alternative possibilities for the rebirth of this historic market. | **Supreeya Wungpatcharapon**



Gujarat (India)

Hunnarshala 'Incubation Cell' supporting artisan companies

Hunnarshala Foundation is developing an entrepreneurship 'Incubation cell' supporting six artisan companies to become conscious of the 'green' potential of the work and collaborate with the contemporary building market. Hunnarshala provides formal training, as well as design advice, financial accounting, administrative and legal support on projects. Within the incubation cell is



Ozari, a joinery firm, **Mathachhaj**, a thatchmaking firm of Dalit women, **Layers** specializing in rammed earth construction, **Wood Grain** specializing in wooden roof understructure, **Span** a space frame manufacturing firm and **Kamerai** a mason guild specializing in traditional walling techniques.

The Hunnarshala campus itself is a showcase of styles and techniques, various contributions from artisans who have worked with Hunnarshala over the years, as well as the six enterprises. We incorporated a Balinese thatching technique in our roof which we learnt during our work in Indonesia, using rice husks. The campus acts as an experiment space, to experiment with different building technologies and roofing techniques, exploring earth, wood and stone, and several interpretation of climate and solar passive architecture.

Hunnarshala recently hosted visits from BIT Mesra, LJ College Ahmedabad, and Goa College of Architecture - to teach on the relevance of local technologies in the development of more sustainable and holistic models of development for the generation to come.

Recently the government of Gujarat has proposed to set up building and technology museums in five typological zones, demonstrating a range of responsive local building technologies and modern science technologies as part of the 'Housing Facilitation Support System'.

Museums in the five sites of Kutch, Sabarkantha, Ahmedabad, Surat and Rajkot will inform and educate on design and technologies for housing, sanitation and other related aspects of habitation deriving inspired from tradition in arts and crafts and heritage in the region. | **Hunnarshala**

Palestine Mapping under occupation

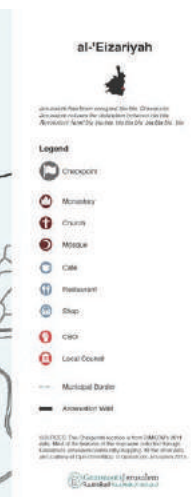
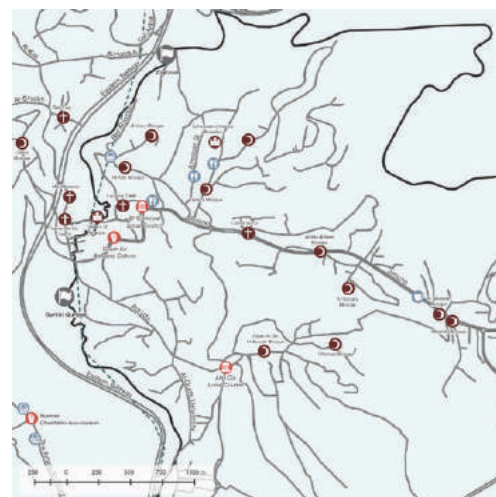
In an age in which most maps are produced through satellites and computer-generated algorithms, cartography is often viewed as an objective discipline, that has overcome the political biases of its past. The case of Palestine, however, serves as a powerful reminder that modern maps remain a long way from objective and often, in fact, actively contribute to perpetuating colonialist practices.

Grassroots Jerusalem (GJ) is a Palestinian NGO engaged in participatory mapping projects in the Jerusalem district, with the idea of challenging the dominant, Israeli narrative and portraying the city from a Palestinian perspective. That is, a perspective that has been systematically blanked out from mainstream international and Israeli maps.

Maps produced by the Israeli authorities identify the Israeli administrative quarter, in West Jerusalem, as the centre of the city, showing the Old City on the far right edge and leaving the entire Palestinian-majority Eastern Jerusalem of the city out of the frame. If on the map at all, these areas are depicted in grey or green to mark them as “empty” land. Entire villages and neighbourhoods are erased in this way, while the more centrally located Palestinian streets and landmarks are relabelled from Arabic into Hebrew.

A similar process of erasure happens on web-maps produced by corporations. Google and Bing, for example, leave the Annexation Wall completely out of the picture, and represent Palestinian areas as unlabelled grey blobs. Google requires local businesses to be verified through a postal address in order to be included on their maps: a condition

Grassroots Jerusalem is a Palestinian NGO engaged in participatory mapping in Jerusalem, with the idea of challenging the dominant narrative and portraying the city from a Palestinian perspective





impossible to meet for businesses in East Jerusalem, where there is no functioning postal service.

The idea behind GJ's work is to provide a platform for Palestinian voices, giving visibility to their stories, the challenges faced under the Occupation, and initiatives to resist it. The fundamental idea behind Grassroots Jerusalem is that none of the existing NGOs and institutions really expresses Palestinian views on Jerusalem, whether because they're driven by international bodies' agendas, manipulated by Israeli authorities, or bogged down by private interests. Smaller realities in local communities are more in touch with what people think, but sometimes fail to "see the bigger picture" and connect with each other. GJ strives to link these local organisations with each other. For the past three

years, GJ has been working in 37 communities within the Jerusalem district, building partnerships with over 60 local organisations – local councils, youth organisations, women's cooperative, sport clubs and so on.

Mapping is a way to bring stories to light, while at the same time providing a tool for community members to identify issues of shared

concern, connect with one another, and coordinate action. So far, GJ has conducted mapping workshops in 12 of these communities. Over the course of these workshops, community members and GJ staff discuss the implications of existing maps. An important topic is the ownership of data: open-source mapping providers such as **OpenStreetMap** offer an alternative to private companies. In this way, what is represented on the map is discussed by community users, rather than decided in closed-door meetings in the Google Headquarters. Finally, community members are trained to use GPS devices to collect their own data. The trainings are tailored to the specific interests of the different community groups, and the technical aspects are generally kept to a minimum in an effort to involve a wider range of people.

The cost of the materials for the project is extremely low: all the software GJ uses is free, and the only equipment needed is a computer and a device with GPS technology, such as a smart phone or a GPS unit. Community members are welcome to borrow this from the GJ office.

After the workshop, community members go into the field, mapping their community according to their own perceptions of what their story is. To give some examples, a youth group from al-Eyzareha has chosen to use a community map to promote tourism, while the communities of Jabel AlMukabber and Sheikh Saed are trying to raise awareness of the way in which the Wall has violently divided the two villages, which used to be only a few hundreds meters apart.

GJ is currently in the process of finalizing these maps. They will be distributed through GJ's online platform, due to be launched at the end of March 2015. Community groups are of course also encouraged to take the initiative in this respect, and use the maps in their own publications and campaigns to ground their claims.

It goes without saying, these maps lay no claim to being representative of the whole community, or "telling the whole story". Ultimately, it is not a question of countering existing maps with more truthful or "objective" ones, but a matter of providing alternatives. Grassroots Jerusalem strives to give Palestinian communities a chance to be heard, reclaiming a place on the map, not as grey blobs, but as rightful inhabitants of this land. | **Valentina Carrero**

Mapping is a way to bring stories to light, while at the same time providing a tool for community members to identify issues of shared concern, connect with one another, and coordinate action

Media

The **DPU Blog** just published some reflections from the interns engaged in the **CAN-DPU internship programme** in the Philippines. Mariangela Veronesi writes on community mapping in Metro Manila, Jessica Mamo explains the working of the Alliance, the Philippines' nationwide network for slum upgrading, while Laura Hirst reports on community savings and land tenure from Davao.



Events

The 3rd Regional CAN Workshop, **Together we CAN! People planning for inclusive future cities**, will take place this year in Metro Manila, hosted by the **Philippine Alliance** organisations of HPFPI (Homeless People's Federation Philippines Inc.), TAMPEI (Technical Assistance Movement for People and the Environment) and PACSII (Philippine Action for Community-led Shelter Initiatives, Inc.). The workshop will regroup over 100 participants from around 20 countries, including CAN members, people's organisations, representatives of local and international institutions, academics and students, etc. The workshop will include community fieldwork in two locations in Metro Manila, **Intramuros** and **Muntinlupa**, with the aim of putting into practice the participatory tools and processes followed by community architects. Intramuros is a heritage site with pockets of informal settlements and is interested in developing these settlements in

the context of conservation, whilst Muntinlupa is an area with several informal settlements located in high-risk zones, on privately-owned and on government-owned properties where city-wide mapping and development is currently being undertaken. For info on the workshop and modalities of participation, contact **Mariangela** at mv.veronesi@gmail.com.

Metro Manila, 15-24/25 June 2015

Thailand's **Community Act Network**, the community architecture unit at the Association of Siamese Architects, is organizing a design workshop for students, focusing on the redevelopment of Chatchai market in Hua Hin involving the local community. For more information, write to **Nong** at supitcha_to@yahoo.com.

Hua Hin, 5-15 June 2015

The 2nd edition of the CAN-DPU workshop, **Cambodia: transformation in a time of transition**, will be held in the first two weeks of May. Students from London's **Development Planning Unit** will travel to Cambodia to join groups of local students and community architects, in collaboration with **CAN-CAM** and CAN. Sitework will focus on three cases: a canalside settlement in Kompong Thom province, the relocation site of Anlong Kngan (20km from Phnom Penh) and Beung Chouk Meanchey, in Phnom Penh.

Opportunities

The **Building and Social Housing Foundation** (BSHF) promotes best practices in housing and urban development through the **World Habitat Awards** (WHA). Each year 2 projects are awarded in a global meeting of UN-Habitat. The winning projects receive a trophy, a cash award and a promotion of their work. Award winners are sponsored to receive the trophy and talk about their project.

In addition, international visits are sponsored to visit the project and to adopt good practices. BSHF may also support the organisations to promote their work further to inform the practice and policies. You can submit a project for the WHA on-line [here](#).

Deadline: 30th April, 2015.

If you have any difficulty in filling the form, or the require more information, please contact **Mansoor Ali** at Mansoor.Ali@bshf.org.

Socially engaged architectural magazine **Boundaries** launched a call for articles for their next issue, **Re-Use Re-Start**, on new processes of architectural reuse involving sustainability, the use of green and recycled materials and a more socially engaged and participative process. Proposals can be case studies oriented, present realized works or be methodological and/or theoretical in focus. Papers focusing on realised projects may treat: adaptive reuse of existing buildings, process or technique of reuse or re-development of parts of urban structures.

Deadline: 30th April, 2015.

Call is open for applicants to the second edition of **Perween Rahman fellowship**, created by CAN with the support of the Rockefeller Foundation to support young community architects. Find the call and application form [here](#). Deadline is April 30.



Don't establish the
boundaries
first
the square, triangle,
boxes
of preconceived
possibility,
and then
pour
life in to them, trimming
of left-over edges,
ending potential;
let center
proliferate
from
self-justifying motion!

- A.R. Ammons