Welcome to ROGUE!

We are very pleased to present the first edition of Rogue. This magazine is aimed at both designers, specifically architects, and those working within the development field, in order to bring together two professions and sectors often considered incompatible. The term development may be unfamiliar. For the purposes of this specific project Rogue would define it as:

Alleviating the affects of poverty most commonly in the developing world, namely the ‘Global South’ though improvements, enabling communities to meet the minimum standards of living, within, but not limited to, the design and construction industry, both in post disaster and long term upgrading initiatives.

Using this definition the criteria for selecting projects was simple;

The project must incorporate an element of design. This criterion will hopefully allow for a diverse range of work to be presented including product, graphic, architectural and landscape design, varying both in scale and situation.

The project must relate in some way to developmental practice or theoretical methodology.

The majority of the projects are specifically within a developmental situation or heavily related to the field. There are, however, some projects which only address development through a theoretical framework, for example by involving community and participatory techniques or through the use of catalytic prototyping or advancing basic resources and technologies. These specific projects are highlighted in order to provide a platform that may allow the project to progress into a more developmental capacity.

For further information on anything within this issue or to find out more about Rogue visit www.roguearchitecture.co.uk

Enjoy Reading!

Emily Lowry
MD & Founder
Rogue Architecture
LOGOS

In order to clearly indicate how the projects presented relate to issues surrounding design and development, key concepts have been illustrated in a simple logo form and applied throughout the magazine.
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Key Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Literature Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Participation &amp; Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Participation &amp; Emotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Participation &amp; Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Participation &amp; Newcomers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>Caracas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>Transect Walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>Disposable Cameras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>Workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94</td>
<td>Live Projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96</td>
<td>Basketball Court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98</td>
<td>La Ceiba Murals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Playground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>Urban Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>We love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>Inspiring Graphics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>Simple Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>Local Building Techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110</td>
<td>Creative Workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>Blending Traditional with Modern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>114</td>
<td>Elegant Recycling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>123</td>
<td>What do you think?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125</td>
<td>Mel Kinnear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>131</td>
<td>Natalya Critchley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>141</td>
<td>Mark Kobine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>147</td>
<td>Katie Shute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>155</td>
<td>Design =</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>156</td>
<td>Ecotourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>168</td>
<td>Regeneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>177</td>
<td>Sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>180</td>
<td>Future Preparedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>188</td>
<td>Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>193</td>
<td>Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>199</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>204</td>
<td>Recommendations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is important to identify and address some of the most consequential and prolific key issues within developmental projects. By doing so, lessons can be learnt and solutions found to ensure the same mistakes do not reoccur and positive contributions can be formed. The ultimate goal being that practice is improved in order to better serve people involved, namely the affected communities.

‘What is now required is an enlarged design perspective that involves questions of land security, affordable economics, clean water and sanitation, overall site design, energy use, and climate change on the one hand; and healthcare, education, and community organization on the other. Citizens cannot achieve this vision on their own. It requires the contributions of design specialists educated not only in theory and practice of the economically endowed cities of the world, but also experience, ingenuity, and lessons of the cities of the Global South’ (McCarty, cited in Smith, 2011, p.9).

Urbanization
Both within the formal and informal sectors, the priority to address increasing urbanization and future planning is becoming a growing concern not just limited to those working within the development or humanitarian field. The rapidly increasing growth of urban areas through population rises within and migration to cities calls for a range of designers, architects and planners to get involved in order to assist in coping with the vast influx of people. ‘The global urban population between 1950-2000 grew nearly four times over, from 70 million to 2.8 billion, and by 2008 to 3 billion. For the first time in history half the world’s inhabitants now reside in towns and cities’ (Chant and McIlwainen, 2008, p.93). With little choice elsewhere, the need for space to live in or to gain a livelihood from, can draw people to unsafe or illegal land. Dense, overcrowded informal settlements have been built in cities, wherever space has been left unoccupied leaving a range of crucial public services over saturated and under resourced.

This need for survival can lead to increased vulnerability of the poorest who lack opportunities elsewhere, for example Lice in the Taurus mountains has gushing springs of water in an extremely arid climate (Davis, 1978). This resource had attracted many people to settle. It is positioned along an earthquake line, posing a great threat to those living nearby. Chris Wethmann, Associate Professor of Landscape Architects, Harvard Graduate School of Design, agrees with Davis that ‘job proximity forces poor migrants to settle in places avoided by earlier urbanization. In the 1950s John Turner noted that closeness to potential jobs, which secure income and food, overrules other considerations such as comfort and safety’ (cited in Smith, 2011, p.79).

This rapid urbanization, currently concentrated in the ‘Global South’, has also been recognized as a factor in exacerbating the current uneven worldwide wealth distribution; ‘most of the world population (80%) and countries (16 out of 192) are part of the Global South, but it has limited wealth, and power remains concentrated in the Global North. Industrialisation, poverty, vulnerability and exclusion, along with urbanisation have been key factors driving this global system (Cuellar, 2012, p.25). This further reinforces existing vulnerabilities as jobs become more competitive and resources scarce. The implementation of poor practice, both in development and post disaster reconstruction, only increases vulnerability, an idea that Davis comments on; ‘Paradoxically, and tragically, the major force that creates the ‘magnetism’ of vulnerable situations is the basic human need of survival … the most lethal magnet is probably the city.’ (1978, p.19).

External Pressures
The lack of design consultancy within particularly in post disaster reconstruction, could be largely due to a high number of external pressures faced by NGOs. There can be many other components requiring attention and driving programmes; ‘Aid agencies too find it difficult to strike a balance between quality and quantity, especially where funds are in short supply’ (Twigg, n.d., p.3).
Generally in humanitarian responses, a relief programme has to provide for the situation as it happens and little time and funding are allocated to ensure that the project can contribute to long term development. This is an aspect Davis is critical of arguing that; ‘Any donor must be aware of the long-term consequences of his actions ... The future form of the new settlement and even the long-term economic development of a community is being determined in the early decisions that are made while flood waters are receding, or dust still hangs in the air’ (1978, p.91).

This is a concept which Fred Cuny, an American disaster relief expert, focussed heavily on. He actively encourages a crucial link to be made between humanitarian emergency response and long term strategies for overall development (Cuny, 1983).

**Inappropriate Solutions**
Possibly one of the most significant issues within development and emergency response is the provision of inappropriate solutions, that are unsuitable for climate and culture, both of which could be resolved through effective architectural design and planning. Hamdi comments on this common problem using an Indian case study: ‘Donor-driven instant housing ‘solutions’ are notoriously inappropriate in layout and technology, particularly in relationship to habits and lifestyles ... undifferentiated house types and lot sizes fail to take account of Indian family needs or cultural differences, nor of different commercial potential related to site location ’ (cited in Lyons, Schilderman and Boano, 2012, Foreword)

Many examples of inappropriate solutions can be found worldwide. The World Habitat Research Centre at the University of Switzerland found that a post-tsunami housing programme in Tamil Nadu, India, needlessly destroyed repaired houses to make space for identical concrete houses: ‘In one village 110 homes that had withstood the tsunami and had been repaired by an NGO were demolished to make room for the housing program of another NGO. As a result of these events most of the new coastal villages consist of endless rows of matchbox houses without a single tree’ (cited in Aquilino, 2011, p.191). In addition to this, many of the workers had little construction experience or knowledge of the local communities; ‘None of the agencies involved in housing reconstruction in Tamil Nadu had worked with fishing communities before the tsunami. Many of those that built thousands of houses also had no previous construction experience’ (cited in Aquilino, 2011, p.191).

Oxfam Shelter found a similar situation in post-tsunami Sri Lanka housing programmes, where culture inappropriateness caused some residents to abandon their new homes altogether; ‘some houses built by NGOs were technically fantastic, but culturally alien; they were rejected by their residents and immediately sold or rented’ (cited in Aquilino, 2011, p.60). Sanderson and
Sharma found that the housing constructed after the 2001 Gujarat earthquake, were not received well by the residents due to the lack of understanding of culture and intangible assets lost, such as social networks and living patterns; ‘Many large-scale, donor driven projects were costly, inappropriate, increased risk, and were mean in design terms. ... The houses bear little relation to Gujarati cultural precedents in either layout or appearance. Although minimum standards of space and infrastructure have been met, the less tangible dimensions of planning quality, people's aspirations, livelihood linkages and emotional and perceptual values are missing ... The inflexible, tiny and cramped layouts bore no resemblance to the living patterns of many Gujarats ... While these shelters might withstand the strongest earthquake, they are quite unbearable to live in!’ (Sanderson and Sharma 2001, p.183-184).

Ten years later Sanderson and Sharma returned to find that whole newly-built villages had been abandoned or sold and that the previous dwellings were being crudely rebuilt by the residents themselves (Sanderson, Sharma & Anderson, 2011).

Regarding the Tamil Nadu post-Tsunami reconstruction, World Habitat Research Centre discovered further issues directly resulting from a lack of cultural awareness: ‘The consequences of ignoring peoples housing culture and livelihoods within the framework of post-disaster reconstruction are coming to light in failed projects all over the world - in abandoned villages, ecological damage, new health problems, and dangerous buildings. (cited in Aquilino, 2011, p.186-194). Some programmes are grossly misguided; ‘One relief agency had distributed heavy woolen jackets, apparently not realizing that East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) was in the tropics with a median annual temperature in the high 70s. Another handed out cans of pork and beans to the hungry, seemingly unaware that the refugees had no way of opening the cans, no way of heating the contents, and that neither Muslims nor Hindus ate pork’ (Jones, ‘The Lost American’ Frontline TV Documentary 14 October 1997). Donor provisions can also hazardous. Davis criticizes The ‘Oxfam Hexagonal House’ unit implemented in Pakistan as not only a fire risk which emits cyanide based fumes, but costly to transport, provides no local employment and is not suitable for local climates such as high wind situations (1978, p50-51).

Increasing Vulnerabilities
As discussed, inappropriate housing can seriously exacerbate the situation for communities in need. The ineffectiveness of these houses often results in families needing to extend and modify them. However this can be costly, resulting in favouritism of the rich and prolonging the vulnerabilities of the most in need. Referring to the FICCI-CARE housing in the 2001 Gujarat rehabilitation programme Sanderson, Sharma and Anderson highlighted this problem; ‘...Many of the original houses have been extended and incorporated into newer, larger designs, several of these at great cost and involving hired architects’ (2011, p.5).

Priority can also be a consequence of social position, influence and politics. Davis comments that following the 1972 earthquake in Managua, Nicaragua, the government of Colombia donated over 100 houses, but every single unit was occupied by families or friends of the president or high ranking army officers and not necessarily the most vulnerable disaster victims (1978, p.23).

Hybrid Adaptations
One of the most dangerous consequences of misguided reconstruction projects is the increase in 'hybrid adaptations' which are often implemented following inappropriate or inefficient housing programmes. Davis believes that modifications made after the original design is built in an attempt to better adapt to local culture is a great source of unsafe homes (1978, p.32). The key focus should therefore be to address why communities find the need to adapt their homes and whether modifications can be allowed for within the original designs of the projects. Both Davis and Cuny criticised housing programmes that focus on product without considering the long term habitability; ‘Shelter is a process not an object’ (Davis, 1978, p.33), ‘One of my major criticisms of the housing that was introduced into Guatemala by many relief organisations was that it did not take this evolutionary process into consideration’ (Cuny cited in Davis, 1978, p.64).

Commonly constructed by locals in an attempt to improve the habitability of a family's or multiple families' current housing, a hybrid adaptation could be considered a crude form of progressive upgrading often in a dangerously uninformed attempt to improve living conditions. Issues can emerge from the uncomfortable combination of modern and vernacular techniques; ‘Hybrid designs that graft modern technologies onto indigenous practices can be particularly lethal, since they rarely form coherently sound structures and are often erected by builders who lack the necessary technical skills’ (Twigg, n.d).

This concern over hybrid adaptation is demonstrated in several villages in Gujarat. One FICCI−CARE house's structure had been altered, an extension
Workshop France found that other important aspects of projects not only affects the way implementing construction but can impact construction education or even a lack of communication between the NGO and the villagers had led to the owners assuming that the painted ring beam was merely decorative, creating a potentially unsafe building.

Educate - Communities
This lack of comprehension not only leads to unsafe building practice, but also on the contrary, communities may not understand when buildings are safe to inhabit. Another example from Gujarat demonstrates this concept; non-structural cracks appeared in an NGO-built school leading to the building being needlessly condemned and abandoned, ready for demolition (Sanderson, Sharma and Anderson, 2011, p.5). This particular case highlights how a lack of construction education or even a lack of communication between the NGO and the villagers had led to the owners assigning that the painted ring beam was merely decorative, creating a potentially unsafe building.

Twigg states that an insufficiency of skills and education surrounding reconstruction can increase vulnerabilities to hazards, as buildings are unable to be suitably repaired (n.d). Often the community are the first response in post disaster situations (Davis, 1978, p.64), therefore communities may actually be responsible, unintentionally of course, for exacerbating the damage if not suitably proficient in safe building practice.

A lack of education when implementing construction projects not only affects the way in which buildings are modified and maintained, but can impact other important aspects of people’s lives. Development Workshop France found that in Vietnam communities took high financial risks to enable house modifications, potentially putting them in a further state of vulnerability ‘Follow up interviews revealed that families were placing so much value on strengthening their homes that they were willing to borrow money from moneylenders and relatives at ridiculous high rates of interest’ (cited in Aquilino, 2011, p.258).

Unfortunately this is not an isolated example. Whilst undertaking research in Mexico, Cuellar interviewed a woman about improving the roof on her home using a traditional and effective vault technique; ‘She is completely sure that she wouldn’t use vaults in the house because she doesn’t like them as they appear old fashioned. The argument that she can achieve faster a vault roof didn’t convince her. She stated that she prefers to wait longer to save enough money for a flat and modern roof’(2012, p.53). This problem also occurred in Caracas, Venezuela when an initiative to encourage urban agriculture was recently trialled by Rogue. The urban community were horrified at the idea of growing their own food from the ground and preferred to pay triple the price at the local market. This programme was then altered to work within a school, in the hopes that the education regarding urban agriculture would gradually infiltrate the community and culture. The concept of modern aspiration versus appropriateness and effectiveness of vernacular traditional methods needs to be addressed through education by architects when designing within developing areas.

Role of the Architect
Not only is it the recipients of programmes that could benefit from increased knowledge, but the professionals working within these communities, often demonstrate misguided intentions and a lack of understanding which contributes to an increase in these problems. The role of the traditional architect is one which adopts a ‘top down’ approach to design reflecting the character of dictatorial Howard Roark in Ayn Rand’s famous novel ‘The Fountainhead’.

‘No work is ever done collectively, by a majority decision … An architect requires a great many men to erect his building. But he does not ask them to vote on design (Howard Roark created by Rand, 1943, cited in Saints, 1983, p.2.)

This method of working, in past decades was very popular amongst notable architects: ‘Howard, Wright and Le Corbusier each filled his ideal city with his buildings; his sense of proportion and colour; and, most profoundly, with his social values. Would there ever be room for anyone else?’ (Fishman, 1972, p.18). Hall criticized Le Corbusier’s famous Chandigarh project as ‘an urban form with no regard for Indian climate or culture’ (2002, p.227). Davis comments on the narrowed aspirations of designers and their lack of knowledge on other significant areas within architecture; ‘[Architects] were typically doing these Darth Vader things with helicopters and gee-whiz materials … The fact that shelter had to come out of local materials and processes eluded these people. (Davis, telephone interview with Kate Stohr June 13 2005). Till agrees that iconic and well publicized architecture aren’t necessarily the projects that the design world should be focussed on; ‘Blobs do not pass on ethics of motions they are, at best, just blobs at worst, part for the commodification of architecture and thus a part of an ethnically and aesthetically reduced world’ (Till, 2009, p.177)
The reverse of this tradition is surely to incorporate the users i.e. the community into the process and work upwards. However this concept has previously been regarded with reluctance from the professionals; ‘In the face of a continuing erosion of traditional architectural skills to other players, the profession seems peculiarly vulnerable to a nostalgic backward glance at a bygone age in which the architect was the undisputed boss’ (Robinson, cited in Jamieson, 2011, p.5). Sennet goes as far as to suggest community involvement would be seen as a threat by the architects of the time: ‘(professionals) have treated challenges from community groups as a threat to the value of their plans’ (cited in Ward, 1990, p.65). Hamdi agrees that it is usually the designers who are unwilling to get involved with community participation; ‘It is likely that those who will be the most reluctant to get involved will be local professionals ... they will view this work as largely unglamorous, inglorious and unlikely to earn them a place in the annals of planning history’ (Hamdi, 2004, p.33). Bloemink reinforces this concept forming a connection between high cost and high reward; ‘The “best” designs are usually equated with the highest costs, so that the designers’ names attain an aura of privilege and distinction - and thereby bestow commensurate privilege on the user’ (cited in Smith, 2007, p.5). Polak agrees
‘I keep asking why ninety percent of the world’s richest designers work exclusively on products for the richest ten percent of the world’s customers. Willie Sutton, the infamous bank robber, was once asked why he robbed banks, “because that’s where the money is,” he replied. I suspect my question about the world’s designers has exactly the same answer.’

(Polak, cited in Smith, 2007, p.25)
stating, ‘I keep asking why ninety percent of the world’s richest designers work exclusively on products for the richest ten percents of the world’s customers. Willie Sutton, the infamous bank robber, was once asked why he robbed banks, “because that’s where the money is,” he replied. I suspect my question about the world’s designers has exactly the same answer’ (cited in Smith, 2007, p.25).

Lack of Community Acknowledgment
Another criticism of the role of the architect is the lack of understanding and provision for communities who their projects specifically aim to address. With such a rapidly changing world, particularly when it comes to urban areas, identifying needs has to be a priority, ‘Even in the poorest parts of Africa, a subsistence lifestyle is no longer viable, and without a way to make money, people simply cannot survive. Too often, designers for the developing world fail to understand the most basic fact, and focus instead on trying to make life a bit easier for the poor’ (Fisher, cited in Smith, 2007, p.34).

In many cases there is also a complete oversight in terms of what the communities can provide themselves; ‘The poor are the most eager to bring about change, and the ones whose numbers and energy are sufficient to do it’ (Boonyabancha, cited in Smith, 2011, p.62). To ignore these people is also to underestimate them. Professionals need to recognize that living in challenging situations can often encourage versatility, wide ranging adeptness and incredible strength; ‘His just about the last word you would choose to describe the energy, resourcefulness, and creativity with which people manage to feed, clothe, and house their families, without help from almost anyone. In fact, the poor are the creators and implementers of the most comprehensive and far-reaching systems for solving problems of poverty, housing, and basic services’ (Boonyabancha, cited in Smith, 2011, p.61).

Despite highlighting the key challenges within development from an architectural perspective, what is crucial to remember is that whilst some of the projects have had faults and programmes have failed, the intentions which have triggered their creation have been credible and a sign that there is an increasing willingness and provision to address these issues.

‘Whilst these projects may be ill-concieved, un-coordinated, technically naive, fragmented, socially unproductive ... they represent developmental avenues behind which the desire to implement them is manifested’ (Baross, 1991, p.19).
Having undertaken both theoretical and practical experience of implementing design interventions within developing environments, some key concepts and tools stood out as especially important to facilitating these types of projects. Engaging and involving communities identifies priorities and concerns, and the process of engagement can have a significant effect on the communities’ attitude, which can drastically impact how the project is received and maintained, ultimately contributing to longer term effectiveness and sustainability.
LITERATURE REVIEW

‘TOP 10 Considerations for the future
... The success or failure of upgrades in nonformal cities is directly tied to community participation’     (Werthmann cited in Smith, 2011, p.91)

In the same respect as a traditional client-based architectural and design work, the community as a collective become primary stakeholders. To demonstrate its significance and potential for successful application, Rogue wanted to explore Community Participation as a tool for designing within development more rigorously.

Define Needs Accurately
There are many theories as to why community participation is so central in developing successful design projects. Turner argues that ‘In short, participation is essential when defining needs, converging vested interest, getting accurate information on the ground, mobilizing resources and positioning problems accurately - all key to effective design and planning’ (1972, p.12). Sanderson agrees that a lack of participation can be disastrous for projects, stating that ‘... too many post-disaster housing projects that did not adequately involve people have indeed resulted in failure’ (2011, p.14).

Appropriate Solutions
Many projects, particularly post disaster, have been criticized for providing inappropriate solutions due to a lack of community consultation. Hamdi argues that this can be disastrous for projects, as ‘Donor driven, instant housing ‘solutions’ are notoriously inappropriate in layout and technologies, particularly in relationship to habits and lifestyles’ (cited in Lyons, Schilderman and Boano, 2010, Foreword), ‘Without stakeholder participation, results have repeatedly been wasteful in resources and administration with little benefit to a community. Participation does matter at the planning stage’ (Hamdi, 1997, p.79). This is a concept that Davis agrees with; ‘First there is a focus of housing or shelter which either ignores this entire issue [of community participation] or deliberately attempts to modify the cultural inhabitants of the occupants’ (1978, p.17).

Understanding Context
An awareness of cultural appropriateness and daily lifestyle, particularly within a development context, is crucial when dealing
with a wide range of people and contexts. Reflecting on a recent community incorporated project in the Himalayas, Arup Associates reinforce these ideas; ‘Resilient buildings should arise from local culture, climate, and resources. Interpreting these conditions in a responsive and appropriate way and bringing innovation and improvement forward without depriving the design of its indigenous roots are the principles of an extraordinary partnership’ (cited in Aquilino, 2011, p.208).

When discussing their Tsunami Safe(r) House, SENSEable City Laboratory emphasise the physical adjustments and adaptations which can be made in order to be more suitable for the community; ‘In Sri Lanka, families of different generations often live together, rather than creating their own nuclear family. The design of the house provides potential expandability by building additional core elements as families grow.’ (cited in Feiress & Feiress, 2008, p.266). This concept was clearly initiated after gaining an understanding of how the communities lived within their homes.

Religious beliefs are another issue to be taken into consideration when designing for a specific community. Oxfam Shelter found that NGO built houses in Tangalle following the 2004 Tsunami

Above: NGO Housing half built and abandoned within a Dalit community
Opposite: MIT’s Tsunami Safe(r) House which gives potential for families to expand their homes
were severely under-utilised due to the lack of knowledge or acknowledgement on the architect's behalf of specific religious spatial guidelines; ‘The families the houses were built for come from a Muslim fishing community, and these houses were wholly inappropriate - "too open, madam!" a home owner frankly admitted to me’ (Oxfam Shelter cited in Aquilino, 2011, p.59). Had the architects consulted with the community and grasped a better understanding of their lifestyle, perhaps these houses would have been more appropriate and usable by the people for whom they were intended.

Twigg believes that safety is usually the main priority for reconstruction programmes, however cultural appropriateness and affordability need to be considered alongside it. He argues that participation can also adapt to local resources such as materials and skills, often improving the efficiency and effectiveness of reconstruction efforts; ‘Community participation also allows for the choice of building technologies that are appropriate to local needs, resources and cultures’ (n.d).

Addressing Bigger Issues
Participatory methods can not only affect the resulting design project, but have consequences for other aspects of community life. ‘Reconstruction can be an opportunity to address longer-term livelihood vulnerability .... Participatory processes involving vulnerable people and disaster victims ought to identify livelihood needs and economic factors affecting rebuilding and technology choice’ (Twigg, n.d). Additionally, through participation real priorities can be identified; ‘Rebuilding itself is often not an immediate priority for local people, whose first need is likely to be to resume income-generating activities’ (Twigg, n.d).

Participatory consultation often takes the form of various events and exercises. Taking part in these processes can offer more than just
'getting the people who inhabit the space to participate is the key to success'

the resultant project, for example, it can also improve on existing skills to reduce vulnerability and build a notion of the collective in sometimes divided communities. Development Workshop France have successfully achieved this concept in their Vietnamese workshops demonstrating safe building practice. Hamdi reinforces this concept of addressing other key issues when working on reconstruction and development projects through involvement; ‘we have learnt, however, that participatory processes both get things done in the immediate phase of reconstruction and build capital over the longer term’ (cited in Lyons, Schilderman and Boano, 2012, Foreword).

A basic way to assess the impact of community consultation programmes can be through attendance. Citizens Architects had great success in India in bringing together the community through a variety of events and exercises as part of rebuilding Gujarat following the 2001 earthquake; ‘Our program offered technology demonstrations, training and confidence-building exercises ... We invited artisans, villagers, NGO personnel, government engineers, and state officers to observe them. At one event 600 people showed up’ (cited in Aquilino, 2011, p.93).

Building Capacity:
A clear argument in the reluctance of project leaders to work with communities is the investment in time and consequently money that is required for consultation to take place. Particularly in post-disaster situations NGO funding relies on time-based tangible outputs such as houses being built, however one could argue that to overlook involvement by the local community is not only wasteful in terms of design, but also in terms of added contribution and long term ownership.

This potential capacity of communities to participate can also provide an economic advantage as a labour resource, reducing the financial cost of the project. Redfield-Peattie, an anthropologist who spent many years living and studying in the barrios of Venezuela supports this notion; ‘In underdeveloped countries characterized by a shortage of capital relative to labor, communal effort has a clear economic role as a way of mobilizing surplus labor to build up such infrastructure investments such as roads and water lines’ (1985, p.68). Davis agrees, stating that communities will naturally organise themselves and begin to rebuild regardless of whether they receive outsider assistance; ‘... unless events occur to prevent it, reconstruction will take place like a reflex’ (1978, p.65).

Redfield-Peattie also believes that there are certain advantages of using the local workforce such as knowledge of negotiating difficult environments: ‘Even an underdeveloped country which could afford to be building schools and sewers by governmental action may find it difficult to mount the programs to get the structures built, and in such a case “community development” may be in actuality the most efficient way of getting rapid action’ (1985, p.69).

Social Mobilisation
Particularly within post-disaster settings, the divisions within a community are often further exacerbated. Engaging people within a group event or workshop could help to improve social interactions between them, which Taylor believes is often the first issue to address; ‘community for them [the existing community] is likely to be the problem rather than the solution’ (2003, p.168).

Viewing the community as a collective also brings further advantages in terms of social homogeneity and cohesion, a concept that Johnson supports: ‘Participatory programmes encourage communities to engage and interact as a unified group which potentially creates further social improvements ... They [communities] win respect and dignity and a place in the governance of cities. They become intelligent because they become organised and connected’ (2001, p.1).

Ownership
Another important theory supporting participatory processes is that in order for projects to be effective local communities need to feel included and involved; ‘If people are to feel a sense of belonging to the world in which they live, an involvement in the spaces they inhabit is a good starting point’ (Blundell Jones, Petrescu, and Till, 2005).

Benefits of community participation are not limited to the early phases of the project, as this inclusion can create a sense of ownership which often impacts the way in which people inhabit their environment long term; ‘When people build their own homes, they stay in them, in part out of pride and a sense of community, but also because the particular home- its size, number of rooms, amenities meets the owner’s real needs’ (Research School of Pacific Asia Studies University of Canberra cited in Aquilino, 2011, p.76). Johnson also agrees that development
needs to address the wider issues surrounding ownership, stating that ‘Physical improvements alone will not work, if local people have no investment in them or sense of ownership’ (2001, p.167-179).

Through working with the community in an advisory and facilitative role, rather than adopting a more top-down approach other positive outcomes could emerge; ‘Participatory planning processes, if adequately implemented, could both empower people and use deliberation to generate plans to expand capabilities people most value’ (Alkire, 2002, p.139).

Although clearly a valuable tool in many regards, community participation must be undertaken with great consideration for those involved, particularly if dealing with vulnerable people. Rogue have identified some key ideas for carrying out community consultation appropriately and effectively.

**Retain Control / Structure**

In order for participatory projects to be implemented successfully, care must be taken as to how, and in what capacity, these interactions are enabled, as further issues can arise if these processes are not properly...
managed; ‘[Participation] is likely to reinforce existing inequalities and result in growing contradictions’ (Lewin, 1991).

Community consultation should not be used as a means to hand over responsibility for a project, but rather to include, involve and learn from what the community can offer. This would result in the design professionals retaining overall management of the projects; ‘Architects should not presume that public space presumes a public vote’ (Wright cited in Brillembourg, Feirress and Klumpner, 2005, p.81). This idea is reinforced by Jobs: ‘It's really hard to design products by focus groups. A lot of times, people don’t know what they want until you show it to them’ (1998). Fitrinato suggests that open communication and transparency between the community and the project leaders is essential; ‘Accountable, equitable surveys, based on community participation and created with transparency, serve as the basis for reconstruction.’ (cited in Aquilino, 2011, p.31).

Manage Expectations
Expectations of the local community must be managed, particularly when budgets are stretched and time is tight. Engaging in design processes and being presented with choice can inflate ideas of what can realistically be provided. Crawford describes how participatory techniques have the potential to disappoint and disengage local communities: ‘If citizens’ involvement is to be ensured, they will need evidence that the systems with which they engage are transparent, equitable and deliver demonstrable public benefits’ (2007 p.8). The RIBA suggests that engagement practices are sometimes adopted with misguided intentions, stating that; ‘In the current policy context a lot of lip service is paid to community engagement, which is uncritically accepted as ‘good for you’, this has the possibility of leading to communities engaging with projects but having little influence on the final result, which can result in them feeling apathetic and uninterested’ (2011, p.6).

Changing Policies
The incorporation of community participation is also being addressed through architectural organisations within the UK and other professional bodies, ‘Involving end-users and stakeholders early and often in the design process is a key part of delivering a successful project’ (CABE, 2004, p.3). ALNAP supports the integration of community involvement within post-disaster reconstruction, despite the possibility that it could result in a slower implementation process (Beck, 2005, p.17).

There is a level of cynicism concerning the extent to which architects are truly embracing the concept, and whether the aspect of participation is simply to benefit their projects in other respects; ‘too often, participation is seen as a buzzword, used as a matter of box ticking to ensure planning approval’ (Fisher and Gamble, 2012, p. 12). ‘Architects were prepared to engage in a participatory process simply to increase their acceptability by a sceptical public, this then allowed the architects to sneak their expert values through the back door’ (Blundell-Jones, Petrescu and Till, 2005, p.27). Whether or not this may is case, the promotion of participatory practice within architectural projects to whatever extent, is surely a step in the right direction.

The RIBA is also strongly supportive of these concepts; ‘If this process is clearly evident in the emerging design strategy, then it is more likely that the community will accept and appreciate the eventual design solution. This will ultimately lead to a design that better fits local
needs and fosters a sense of ownership within the community, enhancing civic pride; a key factor in good placemaking’ (2011, p.6).

Community participation within development can not only ensure overall appropriateness and effectiveness of the built projects, but can impact and improve on many other issues within the community. Dr Victoria Harris, former CEO of Article 25, summarizes this key concept; ‘Good community consultation and planning can be a powerful engine for change’ (cited in Aquilino, 2011, p.15).
Participation is not always straightforward. Depending on the type of community groups, there may be issues to overcome such as language, literacy, representation, and politics, to name a few. In these cases who better than designers to come up with creative ideas to overcome any such obstacles.

Participation can take various forms however we have identified four practices who have taken on successful community engagement projects by addressing unconventional situations or using different approaches.

This man is a mongolian herder from the Ikhbulag community. He is representing a comanagement group who work together to propose small investment ideas. They are able to participate at public meetings ‘a few years ago it would have been unheard of for herders to speak out in this way’ (Vernooy, 2011). He represents the vastly ranging communities who can benefit from engagement opportunities and who are capable of articulating their ideas in order to make a significant contribution.
Studio Weave’s creative and fresh approach to participation and working with communities has inspired a variety of projects both in the public and private realm. The husband and wife duo, Je Ahn and Maria Smith, are becoming known for their imaginative storytelling and the personification of their projects which has led to them achieving recognition on an increasingly larger scale. Bullivant comments on their participatory approach; ‘Among their many strong points are great imagination, energy, a capacity for fresh solutions in the most diverse contexts, and the ability to mobilize participation in many different ways’ (2012, p.231).

Another commendable aspect of the practice’s portfolio is the awareness of the local context and appreciation of what the surrounding communities can offer. ‘This is a studio impassioned by sustainability, social commitment, and collaboration ... directors Je Ahn and Maria Smith engage local communities, work with small, local makers, and acquire narratives from local stories’ (Davidson, 2012). Through a wide variety of projects, both in size and purpose, the practice has been able to impact local communities through their architectural realisations, not only providing beautiful spaces for people to enjoy, but also enhancing the sense of place and ‘shared ownership’ (Bullivant, 2012, p. 234).

This combination of social engagement, craftsmanship and local context has no doubt contributed to the range of awards achieved by the practice in recent
years, most recently the Civic Trust Award and Special Award for Community Impact and Engagement 2012. This award was, amongst others, concerning their very public beachfront project in Littlehampton, The Longest Bench. This project was highly commended in the Sussex Heritage Trust Award as well as the AR’s Emerging Architecture Awards and Shortlisted in Condé Nast Traveller’s Innovation & Design Award, 2011.

The Longest Bench stretches along the promenade of Littlehampton. It currently reaches over 324 metres long with seating for over 300 adults, but due to the clever way it has been designed the length and impact of the bench is infinite.

In line with Studio Weave’s appreciation of local materials the bench is created from tropical hardwood slats which have been sourced entirely from the local surroundings, reclaimed from old seaside groynes and rescued from landfill.

Two steel shelters have been
formed and sprayed with Aluminium Bronze to replace the previously disused shelters. The partially enclosed areas will weather gradually over time on the external surfaces whilst protecting the fun play spaces within.

This project had a great focus on community participation, specifically targeting school children to be involved. An element which is clearly reflected in the project’s playful character and its effortless integration into the original context.

‘We did play workshops with them - we asked them to do a game of consequences’
Rogue met with Je Ahn to find out more ...

WHEN: 04.10.12
WHERE: Studio Weave Office, Clapton, London
WHO: Emily Lowry & Je Ahn
(Maria Smith in background)

E: In the Longest Bench project schoolchildren were involved. Did you target the children specifically or were they part of a larger group?

J: One of the main reasons we engaged schoolchildren was to find out about the site - about how they use it and how they perceive it. Obviously as we don't live there we don't know a lot about the site. The reason we like working with a certain age group at such an early stage, is that they don't have a filter and that's really nice. We decided to do a workshop to engage with them about how they use the promenade. What their parents told them to do or what not to do.

E: As the children were the ultimate user group you asked them about how they used the site rather than anything direct about what they wanted.

J: No we would never directly ask them. We did play workshops with them, we asked them to do a game of consequences, because the promenade is incredibly long and we wanted to see what would come out if we asked them to draw incredibly long drawings. From that conversation about the current shelter it came out that everyone didn't use it and it smells of piss and their parents tell them to not use it. So you find out the kind of things that you wouldn't find out if you had a direct consultation. A lot of people would have said oh it's fine blah, blah, blah.

E: How did you select the children to engage with?

J: Yeah, we just picked a whole class of year 3s and that age was quite appropriate. Before we have done several different workshops with very different ages and we found that that age group was quite good as they are forming their own ideas on something, but they are not filtering that through very much. We also consulted older age groups and that was more functional and need based.

E: Did you find working with the children to be relatively straightforward ... and fun?

J: Yeah .. and tiring, very, very tiring!

E: How long do you think you spent with that class - did you see
them throughout?

J: No, No. We did one quite long workshop and then we exchanged letters, and then they were involved in unveiling the prototypes.

E: I bet they were quite excited about the project

J: I think so ... I certainly hope so! A lot of them will be living there for a long time. It is a permanent project - it’s their beach so I hope it had a positive impact on them.

E: Do you think that by getting involved with schoolchildren - in a way it was publicising the project? Therefore the community will have had a bit of time to process and know what’s going on so it might have less of a reaction?

J: Well I think if the project doesn’t have a reaction then that’s a failed project but that’s a very different question to answer. A lot of designers or artists or architects impose things, that’s kind of part of our jobs to impose something on it, so, I do feel sometimes that public consultations are a used method to manipulate people because you can filter information and you can get statistics that are warped information and you can get information out if you are clever about it. I guess that’s why we stay clear of that kind of data collection or tick boxes. It’s not a perfect process, nothing is a perfect process.

E: Do you think it is critical in how your projects are viewed, that people feel they are a part of it?

J: Obviously I’ve never studied human psychology that way but I’m not quite sure how it contributes to their sense of ownership through participation, but it needs to be done very carefully. Some participation just creates a gaping hole between the community and whatever you’re doing. But I guess it’s all about communication. Generally I would like to believe that a lot of people take our project as their own. It’s very site specific and we don’t go to any site with a fixed idea of what needs to be delivered there. Participation can only reach very small numbers of people and yes that does contribute.
contribute to certain stemming out - it's planting seeds but, yeah, that would be very difficult to quantify.

E: I know you do lots of lectures talking about your projects, but do you ever go back to the community and say this is what we are doing or explain the project?

J: It's inevitable because you go through the planning process and once it's out there everyone will see it but I don’t think we actively try and do public presentations in that way because, again we don’t believe in asking them what they want, we don’t give them an option to choose from - I think that's just lazy.

E: Do you think perhaps managing expectations would be an issue?

J: Managing expectations is the most difficult part of the job - to your client, to your funders, to the users - it's a very difficult part but I think the only thing you can do is do your best! The few things we don’t do - we don’t promise things in the early stages. We actually tell them this can go lots of different ways. You need to prioritise what needs to be delivered because funding is limited and we have been quite clear .. quite brutally clear at the beginning because otherwise everyone feels bitter.

E: Children sometimes have such creative crazy ideas of what you can do - how do you not disappoint?

J: Generally our project has been very well received by kids - they tend to go wild. Children are often more rational than adults. Really adults’ expectations are often warped by context and politics but not really childrens. They know what they want and if they're not getting it, they
don't know what they can't get. It's quite straightforward to understand. Adults' expectations are often more complicated - you can argue through it.

E: Do you think there are things that you have learnt through doing the different workshops?

J: I don't know, if something doesn't work it's more on the admin side, or that things could go slightly smoother, or, like I said, most of our workshops are mostly crafts based. We make something or play games together. So it's not in that high risk situation it's just what you do to plant a seed to begin the process.

E: So it's pretty easy going anyway

J: Yeah, so I don't think we've had a workshop that we felt went: oh no - this was really bad have we? .. have we Maria?

M: When we did the project with clipboard and paper in the rain.

J: Organisation ... and the weather! We have actually been asked to do workshops and we said no this is pointless at this stage and the format they are asking for.

E: For every public project perhaps would you think to do public consultation?

J: If it's appropriate. The main thing you get out from public consultation is the site.

E: But say if it was round the corner from your house would you still do the same - it's not because of where you're living?

J: It's not geographical context and it's really dependent on the situation. For us, if the project wants to be a part of the context talking to people is key because well in architecture schools all you learn is site analysis. That is a very small context - if you don't understand people, politics, economics, social reasons behind it you will never make a project that is integrated. I am not saying you need to be an expert but as a human being you need to meet these people.

E: It seems like that aspect is not always considered in architectural education ...

J: I'm a big advocator of philosophy, politics, economics .. the social side of it, but I am not sure how that can be applied. What I would hate to think would happen at the start of the project would be gathering data because

E: You maybe have a much more organic approach

J: Yeah, you have to understand the project and the context and data is important. It's not mathematics but if you think it is gonna provide the solution like mathematics than it is completely the wrong way.

E: It seems that participation is becoming a more widely used method within architectural practices ...

J: Everyone participates - just in different ways. It's coming out of an era that a lot of things are provided for people and getting to the stage that there needs to be a common understanding of certain things. That it's not because you are an architect you have an absolute say in everything. I don't think what we do in terms of participation is anything unusual.

I think the projects are more than that.

E: You maybe have a much more organic approach

J: Yeah, you have to understand the project and the context and data is important. It's not mathematics but if you think it is gonna provide the solution like mathematics than it is completely the wrong way.

E: It seems that participation is becoming a more widely used method within architectural practices ...

J: Everyone participates - just in different ways. It's coming out of an era that a lot of things are provided for people and getting to the stage that there needs to be a common understanding of certain things. That it's not because you are an architect you have an absolute say in everything. I don't think what we do in terms of participation is anything unusual.

Above: Je Ahn & Maria Smith, Studio Weave

Opposite: The Longest Bench enclosed play area
‘I am not saying you need to be an expert but as a human being you need to meet these people’
E: Do you think due to participatory elements in the process perhaps you end up sacrificing some of your ‘power’ if you like, as an architect?

J: We don’t have authorship issues .. I think that’s probably a different thing. But then again we don’t ask people to judge things for us.

E: On your website you mention that you are really an advocate for community engagement. Do you think you like to be known for this and like to brand yourself with it?

J: I don’t know if we are really known for that, I mean we certainly do participation, but I think we do 1/3 of our projects in this way, and the way we do participation is quite different from what other practices do.

E: I think that’s what it is ...

J: We don’t know very much about how others do participation in that way. Ours is more physically involved, we ask people to make something tell us a story, get involved in construction at certain times, so it’s more an idea of a barn raising, a quite traditionally upheld participatory method. But I don’t know, I think it’s not a specialism particularly. When sustainability became a specialism I’m like ... well doesn’t everyone have to do that? and it’s exactly the same thing, the exact same thing.

E: I don’t think people have that same thinking as you ...

J: They’ll get there!

For full interview visit www.roguearchitecture.co.uk

Opposite: The Hear Heres, Kedleston Hall, Derby
In Association with the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, Tessa Jowell, the then Minister for Humanitarian Assistance, announced that the Government would provide up to £1 million to fund a memorial to commemorate the victims of the 7/7 London Bombings in 2005.

As a condition of the project, Jowell insisted that the bereaved families must be involved throughout each stage of the project, declaring that ‘Nothing should be imposed from on high, nothing taken for granted’ (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2009, p.8). In view of this clause, a design team was formed consisting of a variety of specialists who would work together alongside the families to create a highly collaborative project.
Carmody Groarke, a young London based Architectural Practice, won the invited competition and were given the responsibility to design the memorial alongside Arup Engineers and Colvin & Moggridge Landscape Architects. Having worked with artist Antony Gormley on previous work, such as the Blind Light Pavilion, Carmody Groarke also invited the artist to consult on the memorial project.

This project was clearly going to be a team effort in terms of the design professionals, but the key, from a participatory perspective, is how to successfully integrate and engage the community, in this case, the families of the victims.

Due to the emotionally charged nature of the subject, from the start Carmody Groarke had to deal with a range of unique problems, not normally addressed during architecture or design projects. One issue was initially engaging and communicating their ideas with a bereaved client user group, who perhaps weren’t in favour of a project, but felt that it was their duty to act and be present on behalf of their loved ones. Andrew Groarke commented at a recent V&A Lecture that; ‘This group of people were not your average enthusiastic and excited clients who had commissioned a project, they were people who felt they had an obligation to be there and were not necessarily in support of what we were trying to achieve’ (2012).

From the early stages, the voice of the families took a strong role, which can perhaps be seen most profoundly by the relocation of the site. ‘It was originally suggested that the memorial should be in Tavistock Square, but following extensive consultations, the families chose an area near Lover’s Walk in Hyde Park: a significant historic site in central London, recognised throughout the world’ (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2009, p.8).

Carmody Groarke believe that the collaborative approach adopted for this project significantly informed the resultant design stating that; ‘Fundamental characteristics in the design and making of the memorial have evolved from interacting with the families and other members of the Project Board’ (Carmody & Groarke, cited in Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2009, p.30-31).
Above:  
Steel Stelae forming the memorial

Right:  
Creating the stelae
During the consultation and engagement process the presence of family members accentuated the incredible importance and impact of the loss as a result of the bombings. Whilst the collaboration as a group working together towards the same goal brought out a sense of community and a unified collectiveness. The memorial consists of individual elements arranged so as to form a single grouping clearly representing and emphasising the theme of the singular and collective. Carmody Groarke cite this as a core aspect of the design strategy.

‘The solution needs to represent four separate bomb attacks with different numbers of lives lost at each, but ensure that each of the locations, and in turn each life lost, was given equivalent respect and significance ... As a result, the form of the memorial evolved as four clusters of stelae, each cluster representing the number of lives lost at each of the four locations’ (Carmody and Groarke, cited in Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2009, p.22).

This memorial, not only demonstrates a successful participatory project, but has a unique perspective on social engagement and design. Bullivant comments on the delicate approach of Carmody Groarke and subsequent success of the project: ‘.. the feelings and needs of the bereaved families were met while sensitively and powerfully representing their loved ones in collective remembrance’ (2012, p.40).

The incorporation of participation and community consultation was a previously untested method of working for Carmody Groarke. The young practice whose contemporary projects had recently earned them the Young Architect of the Year Award in 2007 and the Emerging Architecture Award in 2010, have demonstrated to others that successful community collaboration should not be limited to development, and post disaster reconstruction situations. Hopefully the process which Carmody Groarke have gone through, will inspire other practices to follow suit. Most importantly they have achieved a highly regarded project, both in terms of collaboration, but also as a piece of contemporary art and architecture, a frequently sought after and rarely found combination.
Above:
Details of the memorial
With an open mind, something interesting is almost always just around the corner.

Maria Smith, Studio Weave

Participation, we think, is becoming an increasingly accepted method of design, particularly in the early phases of a public project. What Rogue became interested in with this specific project, is the involvement of the community, not just during the design phases, but through to completion.

Located in the East Village, Manhattan, the 5th Street Garden, nicknamed ‘The Slope’ due to the uneven ground levels, was in a state of neglect due to increasing disuse (grownyc.org, 2012). The 5th Street Garden received funding in 2001 from Councilwoman Kathryn Freed (grownyc.org, 2012), this allowed scope for a redesign and regeneration of the space. In 2006, ORE, a local design and engineering practice, decided they could help. Working pro-bono they collaborated with members from the low-income neighborhood to design and construct a sustainably built community park (oredesign.org, 2012).

Upon further investigation, it becomes apparent that ORE, as a company, not only use their creative talents to generate innovative solutions and proposals, but it is evident that they are conscious of finding sustainable, low cost, almost scientific ways to tackle bigger issues through responsible design.
The 5th Street Garden, nicknamed ‘The Slope’ due to the uneven ground levels, was in a state of neglect due to increasing disuse.

ORE
ORE recently took first place in iida International competition with a proposal to replace Incheon, Korea’s infrastructure of conventional asphalt streets, with organically grown sandstone roads.

‘ORE’s innovative approach to design extends to our commercial and residential work, in which project costs are minimized by repurposing off-the shelf materials into custom fabrications. Also in development are a jacket that converts into homeless housing made from recycled umbrellas, hydrogen producing algal bioreactors designed as modular architectural panels, and a zero energy desalination system for arid, coastal regions with high population densities’ (oredesign.org, n.d).

ORE have completed several other projects relating to urban gardens and public space, the most well published being the Dekalb Market in Brooklyn and the Pop Up Farm in Manhattan.

Rogue was able to meet founder and architect Thomas Kosbau to find out more ...

WHO: Thomas Kosbau & Emily Lowry  
WHERE: ORE Office, Brooklyn, New York  
WHEN: 29.11.12

PROCESS
Grow NYC is an organisation very experienced in recovering and regenerating public spaces such as the 5th Street Garden. They were instrumental in organising both the community and the other parties involved within the project. They advertised design meetings to local residents and board members of the garden. ORE then conducted three brainstorming sessions, which were very chaotic.

AREA
The allocated lot in the East Village is an unusually low lying area of Manhattan, this is in part due to many buildings having been burned down to claim insurance payouts (Kosbau). Currently the site has low rise ‘project’ or social housing along the street and many of the empty lots are being or have been converted into community gardens. The 1987 Spielberg film ‘Batteries Not Included’ was filmed in the neighborhood, thought of as a typical run down area of New York.

The 5th Street Garden was originally a lot which connected 5th and 6th Streets, however when funds became available for regenerating the site, the 6th Street side was improved and a fence was erected dividing the site in half. This understandably caused animosity between residents, especially as the sewerage pipes were re-routed through the 5th Street Garden. The 5th Street half was then left untouched and without any money leftover to make improvements.
and allowed people to express their opinions by drawing on large sheets of paper. Some of the ideas were carefully considered and incorporated into the design, others, such as personal parking spaces and a hot tub, had to be politely discarded. What was great about the consultation sessions was that everybody was invited to voice their concerns or ideas and it demonstrated that despite it being a vacant lot, people were passionate about regenerating the space into a community area they could enjoy (Kosbau).

COMMUNITY INFLUENCE
Some of the ideas brought forward by community members were clearly incorporated into the final project design. Areas were requested for outdoor cooking and dancing, therefore ORE planned a large paved area complete with a fire pit and a chimenea. Another request taken on board was for canopies to screen the dividing fence to create a sense of privacy. This concept was cleverly combined with spaces to eat, sit and socialise. It became apparent that during the summer the fire hydrant located outside the garden on 5th Street gets ‘cracked’ to cool the area,
A. Clematis Arbor
B. Wisteria Arbor/ Passive Cooling Water-Mister
C. Sweet-pea Arbor/ Children's Garden
D. Hearty Kiwi Arbor/ Seating Area
E. Grape Arbor/ Covered Seating Area
F. Community Planting Beds
G. Community Activity Hardscaping
H. Sustainably Harvested Mohagany Seating Area
Volunteers showed up at 5th Street Slope to help dig fence-posts, pour foundations, and plant, quickly transforming a vacant dirt lot into an urban oasis
therefore it was important to ORE that a mister was included in the garden to allow for temperature control.

BUILDING
Once the proposal was formed the community were also able to get involved with the creation of their garden; ‘Volunteers showed up at 5th Street Slope to help dig fence-posts, pour foundations, and plant, quickly transforming a vacant dirt lot into an urban oasis’ (oredesign.org, n.d). Disney brought in volunteers to work on the garden, which quickly attracted people to find out what was happening on site and encouraged them to get involved.

The ground was levelled using organic materials and steel and wood arbors were created to provide shading. Rainwater is harvested and used to cool the garden and surrounding areas. There is also a picnic area, children’s garden and performance stage, which are used for educational programmes by three nearby schools.

DESIGN CONTROL
Rogue was curious to find out how ORE felt about working in such an open and collaborative way. We were reassured that apart from having pink paving stones rather than grey and a chimenea ORE were happy with the final outcome and were completely relaxed about the community getting so heavily involved in the design. Thomas’ view was that in these types of projects you need to go in thinking that your design would probably get changed in many ways and not to worry too much about it (Kosbau).

REACTION
The residents were clearly delighted with the finished project, ORE was given a lifetime membership to the garden and
during the summer many parties and social events are held in the new space. As ORE managed to produce the garden using only 1/3 of the allocated funds, many of the nearby gardens will benefit from their thoughtful design, hopefully to the same level of success.

**SUMMARY**
Although the project is predominately concerned with landscaping, we believe, that due to the careful selection of materials, creation of bespoke form and attention to detail, this project has achieved interesting architectural and design elements. This project also demonstrates the potential to work with a community on a project from conception to completion. The combination of working with volunteers in the community, a local design practice and also the nearby schools has created a sense of ownership and long term management of the garden, making it a truly community based project.
At Rogue we think there is currently a significant lack of architectural practices working alongside communities in public projects, particularly in the UK. We have identified some practices who have managed to demonstrate participatory projects combined successfully with interesting contemporary design. However we are curious as to how and why these practices have worked using this inclusive community approach, whilst so many others do not.

de Rosee & Sa is a contemporary architecture practice based in West London who Rogue have been familiar with for several years. Established in 2007 by husband and wife duo Max de Rosee & Claire Sa, their core philosophy is to add value through high quality architectural design (deroseesa, n.d). The projects are typically residential for private clients with considerable budgets. However, they have recently started working on a project in a public space, and have adopted a design process to incorporate community consultation.

This came as a pleasant suprise as like so many other contemporary high end architectural practices in London, their previous work has followed a traditional design method.

However, after speaking to Max about the project, it became clear that the practice has further aspirations, which not only extend to improving areas through regeneration of public spaces, but addresses local community needs through social public engagement.

The key questions for us, was why this project came about, and how it had fitted in with their original design philosophy.

WHO: Max de Rosee & Emily Lowry
WHERE: de Rosee & Sa office, Ladbroke Grove, London
WHEN: 24.10.12

E: How did the Brook Green project come about?

M: We got the project from Friends of Brook Green. At one end of Brook Green there is an engineering consultant and the Brook Green Association asked them if they could do a proposal for the re-landscaping of the Green. They sent that document to the residents around Brook Green, and Claire and I saw it and we thought it didn’t look impressive. They [residents of Brook Green] came back and said “that’s not what we want” So this local movement for the Green got together arguing that the Association were not responding to what they wanted
What should a public pavilion be?

Right: Existing shed on Brook Green
Below: Brook Green
and formed this new association called Friends of Brook Green.

E: So it came about as a direct result of this proposal?

M: Yeah, the Friends of Brook Green was formed, and thought let’s take control of the proposal and see if we can input more directly. They had all these ideas and wanted to create a more sensible plan and not do anything too drastic.

E: There’s already an existing building there on the green ...

M: Yeah, so we thought we go there all the time - we take our kids there and we don’t want to look at this horrible hut, it’s like a Portacabin. We thought we could do a lot better, so we thought we would give them a call and see if we can get involved. Claire contacted the Friends of Brook Green without knowing much about them and said “We’re local architects, we’ve seen the proposals and would love to get involved and help if we can”. They wrote back and said “It would be great to get you involved”. It was all pretty clear from the beginning that it would have to be on a voluntary basis.

E: So this is pro-bono work for you?

M: Yeah the reason we are doing it is not only because we live there - but it’s also an opportunity to build something that we don’t normally build, so we think its worth it. We then met with them and there wasn’t really a brief. There are no commercial stalls on the Green - and I think it is second most used public space in Hammersmith & Fulham. So there is this demand. If you use the Green there is nowhere to buy a coffee.

Our brief included a little kiosk, not a cafe, a kiosk. They just had a shed and wanted to replace that, with not a particularly nice
shed with a large service yard which was a bit of a waste of space, so we took a step back and questioned ‘Well do you really want a Portacabin? ... So we showed them little interventions that had a hinge of something that happened around them. We showed them Westbourne Grove toilets, which is not much, but shows what it can do for an area.

E: So you were hoping that your intervention could be a catalyst for something else?

M: Yeah, so we would have a sort of regeneration type of thing. We wanted to raise the aspiration from the really utilitarian timber hut. We wanted to do something that people would become proud of.

E: Did you think that the residents might have their own ideas or issues about it?

M: Yeah, we knew it was a very public building. Ultimately if it gets to a point where they want us to do something we don’t want to do or doesn’t reflect what we like then we would bow out of the project. Although we are not trying to be difficult, the understanding of doing it pro-bono was that we would dedicate a lot of time to it, but only if it was something we believed in.

We are coming with our ideas, we’re not just delivering the hut we are actually designing it. We knew that it is a public building so we would have to convince people. We had a series of meetings - we presented to the Friends of Brook Green and the Chairman. Once they said “yes - it was interesting and we like it” we set up little resident groups - and we presented to them. We presented to 20 people in groups of about five people - sort of as a soft sell to see how it went down and actually it was generally positive. People were excited about a piece of design rather than a shed. I guess they were quite shocked, they just thought they were going to get a shed and then they were being asked “What do you think? We would love to hear your feedback”. I think they weren’t really expecting that at the beginning.
Its very much a community building so you have to be prepared for that. I think its quite nice actually that people feel strong enough to care.

It's been really hard to show our design because it is so simple, it tends to look like a concrete box so that creates a bit of negativity. There were a few comments - it looked like a machine gun bunker from WW1 or not a morgue but a ....

E: A mausoleum?

M: Yeah a mausoleum! Generally they were more positive than negative ... Everytime there was a comment we would tweak the design a bit. And then at a big event in September, the Brook Green Fair, we showed more about the project. For that we made a model and we had a stall so we showed all about how we got to the design and then we collected feedback and comments on whether they liked it or not.

We compiled all the comments and actually redesigned it. It's still along the same lines, but for example the openings have become a lot bigger, there is still concern over this elevation because it is a bit blank but we are now at a point where Friends of Brook Green are quite happy.

The internal plans have changed quite a lot. The private side of it is much smaller and there is a sheltered bit for parents to watch their kids play tennis. So we have responded to the comments .. and I would say that generally everyone supports it, apart from one mansion block on the Green, they are all retired people.

E: The ones facing the blank wall?

M: Yeah, one of their comments was that the [existing] timber shed is charming and the highlight of the Green area and it's so sad that it has been knocked down. So I mean it is very hard - it's such a personal view. They are worried that it is very stark, we are trying to set up a meeting with just them. We are currently looking at how it will be clad, which will provide a bit of variation.

E: Do you think it might just be an issue with representation?

M: I think the representation doesn’t help at all. We stripped back all the detail and are trying to express the simplicity of the stone. It always tends to look like a concrete bunker and there was a sign on the Green saying ‘Save
the timber shed, say no to the bunker’.

E: How does that make you feel? Have you ever had a reaction about your work like that before?

M: No, I guess that’s what it’s about if you’re building in a public space. It’s very much a community building so you have to be prepared for that. I think it’s quite nice actually that people feel strong enough to care. We’re not going to please everybody but what we are trying to get is a majority. At the moment I think we probably have got a majority who want it to happen. The feedback we got at the Brook Green Fair, was quite weird... The age of the person decided the reaction, the younger generation were really excited about having a kiosk and the older people were worried and just felt that it wouldn’t go with the existing architecture. I suppose possibly the most contentious thing is the materials. The older generation think it should be brick to blend in with the surroundings, but we are saying well let’s get a special building which we think should be made out of stone and celebrated

E: How does that make you feel? Have you ever had a reaction about your work like that before?

M: No, I guess that’s what it’s about if you’re building in a public space. It’s very much a community building so you have to be prepared for that. I think it’s quite nice actually that people feel strong enough to care. We’re not going to please everybody but what we are trying to get is a majority. At the moment I think we probably have got a majority who want it to happen. The feedback we got at the Brook Green Fair, was quite weird... The age of the person decided the reaction, the younger generation were really excited about having a kiosk and the older people were worried and just felt that it wouldn’t go with the existing architecture. I suppose possibly the most contentious thing is the materials. The older generation think it should be brick to blend in with the surroundings, but we are saying well let’s get a special building which we think should be made out of stone and celebrated

E: Do you think if you had done consultation before the designs came out there would have been a slightly softer reaction from the older generation?

M: Yeah that’s an interesting question... We have talked about that here in the office. I think the danger is you go in there going what does everyone think. People get disappointed if you don’t follow their ideas. They might think “You didn’t follow my ideas so I don’t like it”. In some ways it’s easier to just say “This is what we think should go there”. I think you have to manage expectations.

The Brook Green Fair was incredibly useful because immediately there were some quite cutting comments, saying “I can’t believe you are creating this public building and 50% of it is used for storage” and we thought ... yeah that’s right it’s wasteful. So it’s led to the plan being questioned. If we had done that at the beginning then
I think to a certain extent people get onboard projects if they have been listened to or feel empowered.
possibly we could’ve come up with a better plan initially. We have revised it now so hopefully it’s working a lot better and is more generous towards the community.

E: I don’t think you can please everyone ...

M: No, that’s what you’ve got to get used to. I suppose when you are working in residential you have one client who is going to be delighted and their family’s totally onboard and they love it. Here you are catering for such a big branch of the local community, there are always people who are not going to like it. We have done quite a few consultations, I’m sure it’s in double figures!

E: What kind of skills or experiences did you have before that you think may have helped, because this is quite a different way of working for you isn’t it?

M: Well Holly [Lang] worked on it mostly and she had more experience of these types of projects, but I think one thing we do in all our projects is listen, even on private projects we sit down with clients and listen for ages in design sessions saying “What about this? What about that?” I think there is a kind of sensitivity in making sure what we are providing actually responds to something. It’s really important that the community buys into it.

E: So you see them as your clients?

M: Yeah, I think it is kind of the same thing. It hasn’t been that difficult to work with - to have consultations with the community and try to understand how they would use it and things like that. I suppose what we have to do a lot more is sell, and those are skills which maybe we didn’t have a lot of. You really have to commit to people, for example graffiti was a big issue, people thought that stone was so smooth that people were going to graffiti it. I think that if someone’s got it in their head that they want to spray something on a wall they are going to do it whatever, and actually stone is a lot easier to clean than a tongue and groove timber panel. So, we have to sell it more and be more convincing.
E: How many consultations or meetings will you do before it can actually get built?

M: The Friends of Brook Green are keen to show leadership on the Green, but they have to be careful that whatever they do the whole community is not going to turn against them. They are meant to represent the community. ... The council need to endorse the plan also. The plans are going to be posted on their website and people will be allowed to comment. Then they are going to vote on it at their next Board Meeting. We had a meeting with them last week and they are pretty positive about it. When it makes it through, we would then go for planning.

The planning process allows people to vote their support - so if people don't like it they will object. But we are hoping we won't get too many objections.

E: Do you think in a way consultation gives a sense of appeasement so residents don't fight back at planning?

M: Yeah, I mean it's strategic.. we are trying to show them ... Well I think to a certain extent people get onboard projects if they have been listened to or feel empowered. If they have a chance to influence it or that their concerns are being listened to or addressed and convincing reasons are being given if not. We have actually changed the design of the blank facade by introducing a rhythm to create a bit of shadow.

E: Do you think as a practice you are moving to the more public realm - is that what you are aiming for?

M: I think so - we would like to get more variation.

E: Do you think that by working on a 'community' project, that has any negative connotations of your branding as a company?

M: Maybe ... I'm conscious that our background is residential and we work for wealthy people so our brand is high end residential, which I think is fine. I don't think we want to be doing that all the time, so I think public projects would
be really good fun. Either we go in for loads of competitions but we are quite a small office and we cant really afford to do that too much, the chances of winning are very slim.

E: So you are keen to design more public spaces?

M: We care about the area we live in. I think it's easier to act when its somewhere that you know. Not knowing where it leads to I think is quite a fun journey.

E: Do you think by getting involved with these sorts of projects there is a chance it might put future clients off?

M: I think it is a really positive thing that, I think our clients like the fact that they are employing an architect who is building in the public realm as well. ... I think as long as you approach your response and design creatively - people generally respond well to that. If we were to try and get into social housing and design the bare minimum, working to a very tight budget where there's no design at all - I think that would really put off clients, but we are trying to bring design into these areas.

E: Architects may be worried that they lose a bit of design authority in public projects because it is for a wider audience - do you think you have sacrificed some on the Brook Green project?

M: Not so far - there has been quite a lot of pressure that maybe we should use brick and we felt we had to show a lot of examples of stone and had to convince them of the material far more than with private clients, but having said that its not someone's home so they are not so worried. The level of personal involvement of each person that we have been consulting with is less than private clients who can get obsessed with what kind of handle we use. Sometimes you think .. it's just a light fitting!

As long as the design is a win at the end of it then we dont mind how we get there. The danger is if the design aspect of it gets value engineered out and we end up with something we don't believe in. It wouldn't be good for us, it wouldn't be good for the community, it wouldn't be good for anyone.

For full interview visit www.roguearchitecture.co.uk
Small Change is having an event which will include a screening of a selected film detailing the project. Complimentary refreshments will be served.

20th March 2013
Blackbird Leys Community Centre

For more information visit http://smallchangeforum.org/ or contact Katie Shute at Oxford Brookes University
Caracas, Venezuela was selected as an appropriate place to undertake some participatory work and implement small catalytic design interventions accordingly. It was chosen as the city hosts a range of problems such as high levels of violence, poor infrastructure, over saturated transport systems, low standards of sanitation and hygiene, destabilized land, internal displacement and inadequate public services. These issues have emerged as a result of wider challenges including weak governance, corruption, urbanization and a lack of opportunities to improve basic conditions.

Caracas is set within a valley surrounded by unstable hillsides, which have become densely populated by informal slums known as ‘Barrios’. The two settlements (the formal city and the informal barrios) sit uncomfortably together with only limited interaction between the two. As such, the chance to visit the barrios and undertake work within a school was an incredible opportunity, made possible only through contacts who had a preexisting relationship with the barrio community. Many Caracas residents were shocked to discover that we had not only been into the slum, but had also interacted with people living there, due to its extremely dangerous reputation.

The selected barrio was San Agustin, a slum with unusually open areas due to the uninhabitable steepness of parts of the hillside. The community was well known to the local architect and artist who collaborated with Rogue on this portion of research. Architects Urban Think Tank had been responsible for constructing a metrocable in San Agustin in order to reduce the number of houses needing to be destroyed comparing to the original road plans drawn up by the government. The metrocable has created an easy link between the slum and the city, and the small number of families displaced by the construction were rehoused in newly built apartment blocks on an adjacent site.

The school we visited is Catholic and all the nearby children within the barrio attend, although there is a high drop-out rate amongst older children. Children of differing ages were involved in the research and subsequent live projects undertaken. Consequently, much information surrounding daily life in the barrio was absorbed through having such unrestricted access to the community children and teachers.
The research was split into different techniques, each giving different perspectives and findings which then informed the Live Projects that followed. The majority of the research was undertaken as a team effort incorporating:

Emily Lowry  
Architecture & Development Student

Sonny Moore  
Architect Part II

Rafael Machado  
Venezuelan Architect and Design Tutor

Natalya Critchley  
Venezuelan based Artist

The work undertaken at the school received some attention from the local catholic school network and a national newspaper. On one of the days spent working at the school, a journalist visited and interviewed several people about the ongoing projects. A photo was taken of us for the newspaper with the students and teachers involved.

Several of the decorated boxes created during the workshop we facilitated were kept aside for a public exhibition displaying art and photography work within the barrio.
TRANSECT WALK
After spending some time with the teenage children at the school, they offered to escort us on a walk through the barrio. Without their generous offer this would not have been possible. This walk enabled us to see firsthand the living conditions that the community had to deal with and the severity of the challenges they faced on a daily.
Whilst walking through the barrio the most noticeable and shocking aspect was the standard of housing and precarious nature of how the structures had been formed.

As is typical with slum settlements, there had been no formal planning and the teenagers explained that land was accumulated and allocated between families. Any newcomers had to physically defend any space they may have occupied, often leading to violent confrontations.
There was officially no vernacular style as the houses were constructed and altered using whatever materials were available. However brick and adobe houses were common, although in many cases, the standard of construction questionable.
Due to the steepness of the hillside, many narrow stairways have been formed to access the various levels of houses from the few roads within the barrio. This makes accessibility very restrictive for the elderly and less abled residents.

The stairs are very poorly constructed and uneven, often with damaged pipes running parallel to them. During the rainy season, water flows down the stairways destabilising the stairs, making them hazardous.

Lots of narrow alleyways run between the houses, creating winding paths with blind corners which attract violence, making them incredibly dangerous for residents to use at night.
METROCABLE SURVEILLANCE

The metrocable station is a prominent feature of the area we walked around with the school-kids. The children explained that when gunshots are fired in the barrio, a regular occurrence even during the day, the police arrive from the city via the metrocable and watch from the platform. They do not enter the barrio unless they have to, resulting in the children referring to them as ‘chickens’. However, another theory is that the violence rapidly escalates once police or any other authority get involved.

Most of the residents we spoke to like the metrocable as it provides affordable and quick access to the city, offering potential work opportunities. It also allows children who live further away to access the school.

However, one or two of the residents felt that having the cable cars above continually passing over the barrio was slightly intrusive and reduced the feeling of privacy from the more open areas of the barrio.

LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE

All the electricity within the barrio is accessed illegally, one of the teenagers explained that many people die every year trying to connect electricity to their house from the main supply. We saw many central points where the wires has been precariously attached between houses.

One of the obvious issues affecting daily life within the barrio, was the lack of suitable infrastructure. Waste was dumped in any open areas on the hillside, not only causing sanitation and health problems, but chemically affecting the soil, exacerbating the existing concerns of land stability.
Many of the houses along the busier connecting paths of the barrio had physical bars and fences to protect the inhabitants. These demonstrate not only the level of violence within the area, but also the sense of vulnerability felt by the residents.

Dogs are also trained to protect houses and attack unfamiliar people within the barrio. As we walked through, some of the teenagers escorting us ran ahead to ensure any dogs were held or moved inside as we went past.
When asked where he would live when he was older, he answered he would either stay in that house as it is or it would be extended to house him and his future family.

Even though we were unable to see the entire house, the fact that the fridge and other unlikely objects were in the main room indicated that living conditions were very cramped.

One of the teenagers from the school invited us into his house for some water as we walked through the barrio. Niumar’s home housed 11 people, all his family and extended family.

Even though the main room was very small, the coffee table was dedicated to religious statues, highlighting its importance to the family.

Niumar is particularly obsessed with dancing and music, stating that his favourite artists were Justin Bieber and Katy Perry, both American, indicating the great influence they have.

When we arrived at his house we were shocked by the enormous amount of space allocated for his hi fi system and speakers considering how many people live there.

Music is a huge aspect of Venezuelan culture. At the weekends many families play music loudly through open doors, which can easily be heard from the metrocable overhead.
DISPOSABLE CAMERAS

To help us understand further how the children live within the slum and what they consider to be important in their daily lives, we handed out disposable cameras to 4 children, two 17 year olds, a boy and a girl and two 12 year olds, also one boy and one girl. Apart from the age and gender criteria the children were randomly selected by the teachers and the participation was completely voluntary. The brief was to take pictures of things that are important to you, whether it be people, objects or places. This was left purposefully vague to allow the children to record anything that they perceived as important without second guessing or anticipating what we might want them to take photos of.

The similarities and also differences between their photographs are indicative of their lifestyle and display spaces and people of significance to them personally. The insight and natural documentation gained by this simple exercise could not have been achieved to the same extent without stepping out of the environment and allowing the children to direct the programme themselves.
Irani is a popular teenager at the school who seemed to be friends with everyone. When she agreed to be part of our camera experiment we asked to photograph her first to enable us to identify the photos when developed. She immediately rushed off to find a hairbrush and some make up to ensure she looked her best for the photo.

IRANI
Aged 17

METROCABLE = TRANSPORT

‘CHICHA’ FOOD STALL = JOBS WITHIN BARRIO, MICRO ECONOMY
SCHOOL, RECREATIONAL SPACE, FRIENDS, OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

GOVERNMENT APARTMENT HOUSING = SAFER, MORE STABLE HOMES
Yeiberson was one of the most enthusiastic and involved school-kids in our projects. He had many family members within the school, although his brother had been recently shot dead while in the barrio (it soon became clear that murdered family members were common occurrences amongst residents). He is very athletic and was scouted to play baseball for the Dominican Republic, he also wanted to learn English and study tourism at University.

HIS HOME = A GOVERNMENT BUILT APARTMENT NEXT TO THE SCHOOL SEEN AS IMPROVEMENT BY MOST

SHOES = STATUS / AMERICAN BRAND INFLUENCE

OPEN SPACE / GREENERY

MUSIC, DANCING = HIP HOP CULTURE 'TUKI' STYLE
CARACAS / LINKS TO THE CITY = FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

METROCABLE = TRANSPORT / CITY OPPORTUNITIES

US = EXTERNAL INVESTMENT & INTEREST

GUILLERMO - YEIBERSON'S NEPHEW = FAMILY NETWORKS / CLOSE COMMUNITIES

SPORTS = LEISURE ACTIVITY / POTENTIAL FUTURE CAREER

SCHOOL CLASSES = EDUCATION

CARACAS / LINKS TO THE CITY = FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES
Mariam is a quiet 12 year old who spent some time with us during her leisure periods between class. One day Mariam showed us her English homework as she was proud that she had got full marks. Her friends talked her into taking part in our camera project as initially she was too shy.
SPENDING TIME WITH FRIENDS BETWEEN CLASS
= LACK OF SEATING AND SHADING

MARIAM’S HOME IN THE APARTMENT BUILDING NEARBY. TV AND LAPTOP = LEVEL OF TECHNOLOGY WITHIN BARRIO.
Jonder ran over and asked if he could have a camera and take some photos for us. We later found out that his grandad is a photographer within the barrio and Jonder wanted to try taking photos himself. Somehow he managed to get in most of the photos, presumably by directing his friends and getting them to take the pictures for him.

We had to recover the camera from the director of the school as Jonder had it confiscated when he was taking photos in class.
BLACKBERRY PHONE = ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY
FRIENDS, PHONES & LEISURE TIME = SOCIAL NETWORKS & TECHNOLOGY
MAKEUP AND JEWELLRY = PRIDE IN APPEARANCE AND PRESENTATION
We had the opportunity to run a small workshop with some children in between classes during their school day. We were allocated a group of about 20 eight and nine year olds and given approximately an hour, in which we could choose any research activities that they might want to participate in. It was decided that some spare white boxes could be used with some of the school’s supply of finger paints and we would try and create their barrio in 3D. The children were asked to create a space they would want to live in. We gave some examples to get them thinking such as a tree or a boat, they were then left to do whatever they wanted.

They changed into their sports kit, so as not to get their uniforms dirty and sat in groups amongst their friends in the shaded areas of the playground. While they were painting, chalk was used to begin mapping out the barrio with spaces the children would recognize, such as the school and the metrocable station. As this was happening some older children who had free leisure time during this period came over and began joining in with the mapping exercise. As the younger children carried on painting, we circulated between them discussing what they were doing and trying to ascertain why.

Once the younger children had finished painting their ideal spaces they placed them on the map where they most wanted to live. Of course there were physical restrictions as more boxes were positioned, but crucially we tried to be present to discuss these decisions further. There were several main themes throughout their choice of painting and space, but also of the location of their boxes which were questioned informally wherever possible. The significance of why the children independently chose to do certain things indicated issues that they were at least aware of, but most probably disliked or considered problematic.
The children were very excited to take part in the workshop. They rushed to get the boxes and the paints, then one group of friends (below) decided to build one big space so that they could live together.
As the children began to paint several themes emerged. This may have been because they sat in small groups together while they painted, however after talking to them it became apparent that this was not the sole reason.
The older children helped draw the chalk map for the boxes to be placed in. They were especially keen to draw where they currently lived.
When the children placed the boxes on the map a lot of them chose to be within the school, as they enjoy spending a lot of time there, or next to their friends.

Another theme was sports spaces such as football pitches, this emphasises the importance of recreational areas and potential future career opportunities.
Many of the boxes were painted with tall apartment buildings similar to the government provided ones near the school. When asked the children explained that they were better quality and safer.

One child had drawn a lighthouse, he stated that at night the barrio is dark and unsafe, therefore a light would help to reduce violence.

Children who had painted cars, which was also a theme told us that road transport was very bad within the barrio and many accidents happened, one child’s father had recently died driving a bus in the barrio.
Having undertaken the various research activities some common themes were identified. Several were selected to try and address, through catalytic live projects using the limited resources available. With the help of the children, any spare or recyclable materials were collected and identified, then plans were quickly made based on what could be used to start small-scale design interventions.

Children were never asked to take part in the live projects, they simply chose to help and get involved whenever they had free time. It became apparent that some of them told their teachers we needed them and therefore were excused from various classes!

As the projects we chose to do were within, or closely connected to, the main playground they were very public and the children were aware of us being at the school. This helped attract a constant stream of curious assistants from various year groups. The nature of the projects also got the children very excited and interested, and the level of skill required in general was minimal so anyone was able to participate.
The top priority for the majority of the boys in the school, particularly the teenagers, was resurfacing and painting the basketball court. The transect walk had demonstrated the lack of safe public space available to the children, and talking informally with them it was obvious that the school was the only source of recreational areas, so much so that the children spent most of their free time there. The photographs from the cameras also demonstrated the importance of social networks and sports activities. We were informed by the local architect Rafael Machado, that the children in the barrios spent a lot of time playing sports and it was an alternative opportunity for them to move out of the slums.

The workshop also indicated that a handful of the younger children aspired to have more sports facilities, some even placing basketball courts within the school, re-emphasizing the use of the school as a safe recreational space. The need for resurfacing the court was due to complaints by the children that the rough surface was wearing out their sneakers and they had to buy up to four pairs of shoes per year which was very expensive! By resurfacing the court, it was also decided that some colours could be used to complement the existing roof murals by artist Natalya Critchley. This would hopefully improve and uplift the space visually, but also spark further painting throughout the site.

The metrocable transects above the school and the station is very close by. Originally plans had been made by the government to upgrade the local area, however this never came to fruition. Therefore in the school deposit there was a large supply of industrial paints and tarmac for repaving roads. Even though it was several years old, the materials could still be used and we were able to use the abandoned stock for the basketball court. Many of the children, especially teenagers, were purposefully hanging out in the playground, wanting to be involved. Unsurprisingly most of the volunteers were boys who wanted their basketball court finished as soon as possible, however one girl, Irani, also joined in.

One of the main aims of the project, was not just to improve the recreational space within the schools, but to demonstrate what can be achieved using unused materials and inspire the school and students to take on more small painting projects using the same materials and method.
LA CEIBA ENTRANCE MURAL

The excess ground paint was also utilized to make the entrance to the school more inviting. The director of the school was particularly keen on this as a link to the roof murals, which could also be viewed on ground level. The teachers explained that as the school wall formed a niche along the main road, at night it regularly attracts violence as it provides temporary refuge for those involved with gun crime. This was highlighted by the bullet holes in walls. When talking to the children during the painting workshop, it transpired that they enjoyed creative projects and felt very proud that they had been included in the original mural project on the roof.

The workshop that Natalya had conducted for the existing tree murals on the roof used children’s drawings of a prominent tree ‘La Ceiba’, which the metrocable station was named after. It was interesting to hear from Natalya that during the workshops that had been conducted women and children were keen to attend, however most men were nervous to be in such an open area as they felt too vulnerable to violence.

The children’s La Ceiba interpretations were translated into the large scale murals on the roof. One of the drawings was further selected to be painted on the floor of the school entrance in the playground, with the hope that the other tree drawings may follow soon after. Where possible the children were encouraged to take part in the chalking out and painting, so a sense of pride and ownership could be accomplished.
McDonalds had recently donated a broken jungle gym to the school, which was locked up within a small playground space. The transect walk and disposable cameras revealed that the children spent a lot of time at the school playing with their friends, therefore we hoped that we might be able to use the jungle gym parts to create a fun space for the children to play in. The existing site was cleared of any unsafe items, such as a machete and broken metal pieces. Having spent time in the school researching and facilitating small projects, it was obvious that the younger children would benefit from having playground space especially for them, as the existing playground was dominated by older children playing sports and children trying to find shaded areas to sit with friends.

Resources were extremely limited on this project, particularly the time available to work on it, therefore the activities had to be kept basic. Once the first few pieces were moved into some space, the children took any opportunity to run into the space, taking great delight hiding in the tubes. From the outset it was decided that the project would be left purposefully incomplete. This was to allow the school to take on and develop the project, as and how they needed, should they want to.

Even though some of the initial more complicated designs were scrapped in favor of a very basic plan, the way in which the children inhabited the space and engaged with the tubes, immediately showed that what we had done, although not perhaps the most impressive architectural project, was invaluable to them.
As a follow on from the jungle gym project, we wanted to use the unbroken McDonald’s tubes to create a small allotment on one edge of the school site. Initially we discussed the idea of encouraging barrio families to grow their own produce to become more self-sufficient. The soil in San Agustin and the unusual amount of open areas meant that creating small community allotments may be possible and greatly beneficial to the residents, who currently pay a relatively high price for produce at the supermarket. This was discovered whilst talking to the teachers and children at the school and visually demonstrated during the transect walk. The painting workshop also identified a desire for more trees and plants within the surrounding area of the school. The children explained they were needed for their aesthetic and shading qualities.

However, the families within San Agustin are unfamiliar with growing produce as there is no history of agriculture within their community. Therefore, it was decided that this project would work best within the school environment as it could be linked to an educational programme, which would involve various classes in taking care of the garden. It is hoped that this intervention would act as a catalyst project, the concept of which could be disseminated throughout the barrio community.

The government had previously created a small co-op allotment in the area of Belles Artes in the centre of Caracas. It was here that we learned what would be required for growing fruits and vegetables within the school, and what the best conditions would be. The seeds and plants were also donated by this garden to spark the agriculture programme at the school.

In addition to creating small planters for the differing types of vegetables, some larger tubes were repurposed to form composting containers which could be incorporated into the agriculture project. These were used by the school handymen who immediately began filling them with biodegradable waste found around the playground.

Many of the children were encouraged to take part in the planting and taught about taking care of the plants. It is hoped that this project not only provides a sustainable source of food, but also impacts the general standard of nutrition within the barrio. Like the playground, this was not a highly designed project, it was simply making use of the scarce resources available and trying to produce something meaningful for the children that could impact on their everyday lives.
When you find something great, we think you should share it. Rogue have collected several projects and ideas related to design and development in order to compile our list of favourites spanning various disciplines. We hope that those featured will inspire and encourage others as to the possibilities of merging good design with good development.
Frank Chimero is an American designer and illustrator who currently teaches graphic design and typography at Portland State University. He runs a graphic design blog, ‘Thinking For a Living’ and has recently had a book published, ‘The Shape of Design’. He advocates people-centred design, stating in a recent ‘Build’ conference that ‘design is for people, very clearly’ and that designers are required as; ‘people are not logical all of the time, we are emotional and squishy ... logic breaks when we work with people’ (2010). These ideas clearly encourage engagement with people, recognising that there is no simple design that can be prescriptively applied across the board, and that different people require different or adaptable design solutions.

These are concepts which can clearly overlap into developmental work and we at Rogue strongly agree with Frank that design is most valuable when it really is all about people. The great inspiration in Frank’s work is his ability to use simple graphics to convey powerful messages, our favorite being his series of ‘People Ignore Design that Ignores People’ prints. When asked about his top 10 favorite things Frank answered: ‘#10 Uncovering the things that truly make me happy. Narrative. Levity. Space. Warmth. Food. Drink. Connection. People.’ (Chimero, 2009, cited in www.grainedit.com).
Rogue feel that because of the work they have done to raise awareness of safe building practice Citizen Architects should be recognized as innovators of creative development practice. Following the earthquake in 1993, Citizen Architects began working with communities in the reconstruction of Latur. There was a reluctance within the community to build with traditional materials such as wood and stone, as the blame for losing their loved ones during the earthquake fell upon the collapsed structures of previous homes. However, by modifying building techniques, these materials were far more appropriate than the favoured concrete houses the communities wrongly believed to be safer.

A need for improved building techniques within the area was key in getting the community underway with reconstruction. Citizen Architects found that trying to convey structural properties within new construction techniques was difficult for the locals to comprehend; ‘Our communication challenges stemmed in part from our own zeal to offer an alternative design practice ... We were missing the communication tools that would help people relate to their own safety to various technical measures with confidence and understanding’ (Desai, R & Desai, R. cited in Aquilino, 2011, p.88-90).

Through working with community groups, Citizen Architects realized that certain objects could demonstrate important structural concepts. A lump of clay attached to the top of a twig and shaken gently, explained inertia forces in a simple way the community could easily understand. By educating a group within the community, this knowledge could then be disseminated amongst the rest of the population to ensure an improvement to the standard of building, particularly in an area vulnerable to earthquakes; ‘They need to be able to understand the concept and practice sufficiently to teach other masons and to defend their work in the face of market forces and misguided engineers’ (Desai, R & Desai, R. cited in Aquilino, 2011, p.93).

We hope that this project and Citizen Architect’s creative attitude to working with communities inspires others in how to successfully convey serious messages regarding development in a way that is comprehensible to the community.
FEATURED IN BD MAGAZINE, ARCHITECTS’ JOURNAL, THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW AND BUILDING DESIGN TO NAME A FEW, THE ECO-RESORT IN GULUDO HAS ALREADY RECEIVED SIGNIFICANT ATTENTION. THE REASON WE, AT ROGUE, WANT TO FURTHER EXPOSE THIS PROJECT IS THE CONSIDERABLE EFFORT KILBURN NIGHTINGALE ARCHITECTS HAVE GONE TO, TO ENSURE THAT THIS RESORT IS SENSITIVE TO AND APPROPRIATE FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY WHILST MINIMIZING ANY NEGATIVE IMPACT THIS DEVELOPMENT MAY HAVE.

CONSULTATION WAS UNDERTAKEN WITH THE COMMUNITY BENEATH THE VILLAGE’S CENTRAL MANGO TREE. THE DESIGN HAS BEEN CREATED IN LINE WITH TRADITIONAL VILLAGE TECHNIQUES, WHICH SUBSEQUENTLY UTILIZE LOCAL SKILLS AND LABOUR. THE ARCHITECTS HAVE ALSO CONSIDERED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT TO ENSURE LONG-TERM MANAGEABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY; ‘A KEY ELEMENT OF THE DESIGN IS THE USE OF SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

KILBURN NIGHTINGALE ARCHITECTS
GULUDO ECO-RESORT, MOZAMBIQUE
sources - solar power and heating, methane gas production, compost toilets, and the buildings are designed to maximise natural ventilation and shading (kilburnnightingale.com, n.d). The project will also benefit the local community, not only through construction work, long term job-creation and an increase in eco-tourism, but a portion of the profits will be allocated back to the village and district.

This project highlights how, with a little extra thought and creativity, beautiful, distinctive architecture can be created whilst involving the existing communities. This project illustrates a rare combination of vernacular local techniques and materials, alongside contemporary design and modern luxury. Having the community at the heart of this project is something Rogue highly commends Kilburn Nightingale for achieving and clearly this is key to their own design philosophy; ‘Our approach can be briefly summarised as minimizing the negative impact on the environment, whilst maximizing the long-term benefit to the locality, the community and the economy in general’ (kilburnnightingale.com, n.d).

Opposite from top
Community meeting under the village mango tree
Presentation of the project
Locals constructing the roof using traditional techniques
Above
Finished project showing traditional construction methods
In a similar manner to Citizen Architects’ work in Latur, Development Workshop France (DWF) have come up with some enormously creative ideas to engage local communities and reduce vulnerability by strengthening their homes. What we find particularly interesting is the use of large workshops and events to gather communities and convey important ideas.

One project that really stood out is the work DWF are doing in Vietnam, where local traditions and popular media have been used to communicate messages to reduce vulnerability. DWF recognize the emerging need for educating people on safer building practice; ‘The shift to new materials and techniques is almost universal, as poor communities come to associate new building practices with a better lifestyle. But this change in habit has never translated - in either material or economic terms- into safer homes or more stable futures’ (Norton, J. and Chantry, G., cited in Alquilino, 2011, p.254).

DWF have adopted communication methods with a Vietnamese twist. Using traditional Vietnamese legends such as the “Mountain King”, songs and poems are performed in coordination with well known stories incorporating messages that educate communities on how to reduce vulnerability to the annual typhoons. These are
A selection of photos from various DWF events using traditional Vietnamese communicative techniques.

On their website, DWF state that; 'Many of the animation activities are designed to be “memorable” - events that one will recall maybe months or even years later (2012). The events are designed specifically so that everyone can get involved in some way. They are also accompanied by information handouts and follow up visits to ensure the seriousness of the message is not forgotten.'
Cited by Forbes India as ‘the hottest green idea, we’ve seen’ (2011), the Ecooler by Studio Kahn is an artistic and inventive replacement of a modern day air conditioner. ‘Taking its cues from ancient Middle Eastern design elements, the Ecooler is an electricity-free ceramic cooling device that interior design snobs can get behind’ (Hickman, 2010).

Mey and Boaz Kahn are the husband and wife team behind the Ecooler. Based in Jerusalem they describe their design philosophy on their website; ‘Our contemporary ideas are meant to surround you with stories, emotions, hopes and fantasies, revealing questions about our way of living and suggesting new, exciting ways of looking at it’ (2012). All of their ceramic products are self-produced with domestic scale equipment and with a strong sustainability ethos, no scrap of clay is ever wasted.

The Ecooler aims to ‘create an equality and mutual influence between developing countries and first-world countries’ (studiokahn.com, n.d). Using a simple ceramic tile, the hollow tiles can be connected through simple joints in order to allow cooling water to pass through a screen. ‘The system combines two traditional elements – the jara and the mashrabiya. The mashrabiya is a characteristic element of Islamic architecture. It serves as a breathing screen between the street and the inner courtyard or home and enables the passage of air and light. The jara serves to cool the water in clay containers by water seepage through simple joints’ (Hickman, 2010).
and evaporation from the outer surface, as with the human body’s perspiration system’ (Hickman, 2010).

The connections between the tiles are simple and the system can be adjusted and adapted without the need to disassemble an entire wall. The amount of water used within a wall is approximately 9.5 litres, a similar amount to that used when a toilet is flushed. These aspects assist in the product being sustainable and low-cost; ‘Designers from Studio Kahn have just presented an affordable and eco-friendly way to keep your place cool’ (igreenspot.com, n.d).

We think this product ticks the boxes in terms of sustainability and affordability, but could also be a significant technological advance in developing countries, without losing the impact of a beautifully crafted design. Studio Kahn take great care in creating each tile, which is evident in the final product; “We love the fact that we can self-produce our products with very domestic equipment. It feels like magic each time we are molding the ceramic liquid and finally get a high finished product.” (studiokahn.com, 2012).

As the Ecooler can be simply made on a domestic scale using clay and pre-fabricated joints. This ensures appropriateness for use within many developmental scenarios. For now, the Ecooler is a a prototype which won third place at the iida awards in 2010, however Rogue think it is a very exciting product combining vernacular concepts with modern design. We are not the only ones either; ‘Enough said, we can’t wait for this piece to go into production!’ (Forbes India, 2011).
The Katrina Furniture Project is an innovative example of how combining thoughtful design with community engagement can spark regeneration within a post disaster situation and provide opportunities for sustainable future livelihoods. Stephen Goldsmith, Architect, Professor of City & Metropolitan Planning and Campus Sustainability at the University of Utah and Creator of the Katrina Furniture Project, kindly agreed to discuss this work.

**WHEN:** 07.12.12  
**WHERE:** Skype, London to Utah

**HURRICANE**  
Causing $96 billion dollars in damage (foxnews.com, 2010) Hurricane Katrina hit in 2005 was one of the strongest storms to impact the coast of the United States during the last 100 years (ncdc.noaa.gov, 2005). With winds and a storm surge that crested up to 27 feet high, 300,000 homes were destroyed or left uninhabitable. The debris, if stacked onto the space of a football field, would reach over ten and a half miles high (foxnews, 2006).

**CONCEPT**  
"Walking through the city of New Orleans after Katrina, curbside hills of debris moaning their embedded stories through embodied energy, we could see a second harvest waiting to be threshed" (katrinafurnitureproject.com, 2012). Whilst sleeping in a 300 person FEMA tent and showering in semi trailers, Stephen, alongside the Purchase College Journalism Students were exposed to the reality of living within

**WHO:** Emily Lowry & Stephen Goldsmith
Opposite: Packaging for the project
Above: Salvageable debris in front of a hurricane damaged house
Right: Stephen Goldsmith; Cypress and Oak boards due to be deposited in the ocean
a chaotic post-disaster environment, which inspired this project.

Whilst walking through the city, the group was shocked by the overwhelming piles of quality debris material such as cypress and oak boards, which had previously provided shelter for so many residents. Even more shocking was the plan to transport the materials on barges up the Mississippi River and dump into the ocean. Stephen describes this as ‘Nothing short of outrageous’ (2012).

Bryan Bell of non-profit ‘Design Corps’, a consultant of the Katrina Furniture Project also recognizes the potential within the debris; ‘Many Creole townhouses and shotgun homes were built from centuries-old cypress native to the region and dense oak boards pulled from the sides of barges. You couldn’t buy those materials anywhere. They would be so expensive’ (cited in Hamilton, 2007).

Stephen identifies more than the physical attributes of the rubble describing poetically the transfer of embodied energy through the materials which encapsulate the story and the wisdom shared by the people connected with the disaster. He also describes the disaster as human, comparable to 9/11 due to the consequential issues concerning ‘social injustice and environmental racism’ (2012).

This incredible sensitivity and passionate approach led to a collaboration being formed between various local organizations and students in order to do something which would address the wasteful plans of dumping the salvagable materials and assist in the rebuilding of people’s lives.

PROJECT
The project initially began with workshops to create the ‘step stool’ prototype. The stool has significant meaning due to the association with finding higher ground, perhaps from water rising and the stories relating to Katrina that can be told to children by their parents or grandparents as they use it to wash their hands (Goldsmith, 2012). The context of New Orleans was incredibly important, the dual culture of night time musicians and daytime tradesman such as carpenters and plasterers was crucial in providing skilled workers to create the furniture, the blend of two cultural aspects described as ‘born from the hand’ (Goldsmith, 2012).

The simple nature of the furniture allowed for capacity building workshops, which enabled novice workers to learn new skills and gain livelihood opportunities. The workshops incorporated furniture-making techniques, which could be utilized for house building ‘So next time the storm comes, they don’t have to wait 18 months for the federal government to react’ (Palleroni cited in Hamilton, 2007). Business advice is also available to support participants expanding into entrepreneurial ventures; ‘Organizational business plans, equipment purchases and the marketing of Katrina Furniture Workshop products will be assisted by the business schools of participating universities, local banks, and Design Within Reach, the nation’s largest catalog furniture company’ (basicinitiative.org, 2012). As part of a carefully considered marketing plan, the step stools adopted the Katrina Furniture Project branding, in the hope that people would be more likely to purchase items associated with assisting the disaster recovery.

Stephen was also approached by the National Council of Churches, after over 1000 churches in New Orleans had been damaged, to facilitate the reconstruction of expensive church pews lost in the storm (2012). Sergio Palleroni comments on the significance of the church; ‘After the storms, churches were the one part of society that really worked in New Orleans, the government collapsed … the churches were there for people’ (cited in Hamilton, 2007). Photographs of outdoor services being held on the newly built pews amongst piles of collapsed buildings and rubble, epitomized the severity of the destruction in contrast with the strength and resilience of the community.

The step stools and the pews were the first products to be created. Since their inception a cypress table has been designed, which further relates back to the
Opposite:
Children playing during a workshop
Above:
Peter Spruance of BaSiC Initiative
working on a prototype; Initial Step
Stool design
Left:
BaSiC Initiative participants (from left) Jim Adamson, Peter Spruance, Sandor Pratt and director Sergio Palleroni
‘I am not a man of faith ... my faith is in other people’

(Goldsmith, 2012)
culture of New Orleans; ‘Each prototype designed by Palleroni and a team of University of Texas students has both a practical and symbolic function. The cypress table, for example, pays homage to the Crescent City’s fame as a foodie heaven’ (Hamilton, 2007). It is this aspect of contextual appropriateness and cultural appreciation that has allowed the project to create items not only to benefit the community of New Orleans, but to represent and celebrate their heritage and culture on a wider scale; ‘The furniture — you touch it and you feel New Orleans’ (Palleroni cited in Hamilton, 2007).

ISSUES
At one stage in the project, discussions surrounding the outcome of the furniture caused contention amongst the programme leaders. The concept of marketing the stools and tables via Design Within Reach, a high-end nationwide designer product retailer, brought into question the finish and quality of the furniture. Whilst some suggested the items be taken to external manufacturers to be professionally lacquered and refined, Stephen believes this would remove the authenticity and honesty of the products by ‘designing up’ the basic pieces (Goldsmith, 2012). He was passionate about keeping the pieces true to their New Orleans origins, suggesting that by using the community solely for physical labour was unacceptable, describing the idea as metaphorically comparable to plantation attitudes from a previous era.

FUTURE
This project is not about providing aid and assisting reconstruction. The comprehensive approach of addressing community needs has allowed for rebuilding neighbourhoods and creating opportunities, through design. It keeps the community at the heart, which some believe is the most crucial aspect of its success; ‘I believe that the best way to solve humanitarian crises is by harnessing the local community to help develop solutions to their problems ... This project is community specific and that’s why I think it is so successful’ (Quale, 2008).

The furniture, although beautifully and simply designed, represents more than the physical, sustainable and ecological attributes. The carefully planned programmes surrounding the furniture manufacture are thoughtful, both in physical and psychological respects; ‘For now the project is funded by universities and private foundations. But eventually, Palleroni hopes to create a viable business in which locally built furniture — all made from recycled wood — would be sold nationwide,
providing jobs for local residents who will make each piece by hand and pocket the profits’ (Hamilton, 2007).

Goldsmith describes the devastation and devotion of the New Orleanian people in a compassionate and poetic manner; ‘I am not a man of faith ... my faith is in other people’ (Goldsmith, 2012). The way he characterizes the salvaged materials as containing embodied energies and stories that can be passed on symbolizes the sensitive ethos behind the project; ‘These materials had learned a lot in their journey, their strength only modified by centuries of storms; they can learn to build new stories again, creating jobs and hope for the people of New Orleans’ (katrinafurnitureproject.org, 2012).

In this case, the designer can really add value by recognizing the potential within materials and transforming the reality into self sustaining community projects; ‘The Katrina Furniture Project offers new ways of seeing how devastation can reveal riches, both human and material, and along the way catalyze our spirits to embrace a changing ethos of community based, participatory practices and sustainable development’ (katrinafurnitureproject.org, 2012).

Right: Church pew made of 19th-century cypress reclaimed from a home in New Orleans’ Lower Ninth Ward after Hurricane Katrina.
Wanted: Young people with big ideas

Are you 13-25? Need money, support or training to help improve your community? We help young people launch ideas and programmes that benefit the places where they live. You provide the big idea, we provide £300 and the support to make it happen.

Apply now
what do you think?

We at Rogue, kept seeing the same issues within design occurring on numerous projects, so we decided to ask a carefully selected group for their opinions on these matters. Several people were contacted who we felt best represented various sectors of design and development. We wanted to understand their points of view on these common themes, therefore the same set of questions were posed to each individual to gain comparable responses. We hope the answers reveal common ideas, and collectively form suggestions to improve the future of design and development.
Mel grew up in Johannesburg, South Africa where she studied architecture and worked for a variety of practices, mainly on housing projects with a focus on sustainable design. As co-founder of Architecture Sans Frontières (ASF)-London, in 2004, she currently operates as General Manager on a voluntary basis. (ASF-UK, 2012).

In 2006 Mel began tutoring architectural design at Oxford Brookes University where she co-runs ‘Unit D’, an undergraduate studio with a focus on development and issues surrounding vulnerability. This year the studio was run with Peter Newton, who, with Mel, also founded i3nk, an architectural practice in Oxford. To complement her work for both ASF-UK and the design teaching, Mel completed a Masters in Development and Emergency Practice in 2010 at Oxford Brookes University. (Brookes, 2012).

Rogue were really interested to hear Mel’s views on key developmental issues. Not only is she a committed tutor heavily supportive of her students and their abilities, but someone with a clear passion for architecture and development. The work she has done for ASF and Oxford Brookes, and in which she continues to be involved, is highly commendable and a positive example for others.

WHO: Mel Kinnear & Emily Lowry
WHEN: 23.10.12
E: How did you get into the development field?
M: I grew up in Johannesburg during the end of apartheid and my education at university included quite a lot of community centres and projects within the informal settlements around the city. In 2003 my partner and I were then lucky enough to travel around the world for a year where we spent the majority of our time in South and Central America and South East Asia where we were amazed at how much poverty and discrimination was evident, having naively thought that, due to apartheid, South Africa was unique. When we got back in 2004 to the UK we decided that we really wanted to do more useful things than just working in commercial practice and one of Pete’s [Newton] old tutors was helping one of his students set up ASF Cambridge. This guy, Jaime, also wanted to set up an ASF-UK
professional organization and that's where we got involved and have been volunteering for ASF ever since.

E: How would you describe your job / speciality / interest?

M: Volunteer, general dogsbody / girl friday....manage and develop projects within the organisation, do all the bookkeeping/financing/ cost projections, mentor many young people in their different roles within the organisation.

E: As a designer / architect / ... do you think you have a specific role within development? If so where do you fit in?

M: In my current role at ASF there isn't much room for design as the workshops we run etc. are mostly about capacity building etc. but I do think that there is a role for designers – I just haven't quite worked out what that is yet...but more enablers than providers but I have yet to really see this in practice – and the outcomes of this in terms of built form.

E: How do you think your work or design in general can address bigger issues such as governance / dependency & ownership / livelihood preservation?

M: I think that if these issues are at least understood as much as possible at the outset of a design project so that architects don’t approach the problem in a naïve way, then there is more chance for the project's success – this goes for all projects really including the high-brow designer projects eg. the Maxi Centre in Rome designed by Zaha Hadid, and the Public in the West Midlands in the UK, designed by Will Alsop, have both struggled a great deal financially post construction suggesting perhaps that the projects were too expensive for the client....sad that the architects do not at least have some interest and engagement in the financial wellbeing of the organisations they are designing for....although most architects would say it's either not their problem or they are simply not involved in those early stage discussions.

E: How important do you think it is to involve end users i.e. communities, within design processes in a participatory capacity?

M: Really important, but in a capitalist world where profit is the main driver of building anything this is hard to manage and implement. I haven't worked for the end user of a building in my commercial architectural experience for years, other than designing a tiny house alteration for a couple in Oxford....there's no money, no time and investors don’t generally have the will as they are simply using the project to make profit – sell on and move on! Again, it's hard to see how
this can really be implemented in a meaningful way in more developed countries. Its sort of working in the developing countries where the relevant architects are doing everything in their power to design in a participatory way, but the real impact of these, and examples are quite hard to come by of slum upgrading projects that are truly participatory and built (I’m sure there are some but these aren’t collated into any meaningful publication that can be used for reference).

E: Would you agree that local rather than imported is always more desirable or effective, in terms of resources both in skills and materials?

M: Absolutely!

E: ... What would you say are the most +ve/-ve impacts?

M: Local people, even if they are still outsiders in the community in which they are working, at least understand the culture of the place a bit more than foreigners, have a better grip of locally available materials, skills and costs, and if they are good architects / professionals they will design more relevant responses in terms of the climate constraints etc. Negative impacts can be that local people are entrenched in a building method that is harmful to the environment and without some kind of international intervention this could continue as it’s hard to change existing methods by yourself in your own country eg. In South Africa there is still no requirement to have any insulation in the walls or double glazing even though it goes down to below freezing in the evenings in winter in Johannesburg, people are freezing throughout the winter which lasts around 2 – 3 months, subsequently causing quite a lot of illness (many people suffer from bronchitis throughout the winter months) and also large costs for heating and the impact on climate change that this has.

E: Designing for developmental projects has been described by some as a process rather than a product i.e. it should incorporate long term adaptability and gradual changes - do you think this a realistic goal?

M: I think it is realistic, but I don’t know how it can be implemented without a larger group of people promoting it. We are still all on the fringe really in terms of professionals working in this field.

E: Do you think this is the way to design for development?

M: Yes, although in the UK harder to see again, but perhaps with the global recession plus the IMF warnings that we might be headed for worse times yet, there may be a change in terms of building homes for people.
Pete was saying that he went to a conference on urban design on Friday and some of the developers were noting that there is potentially going to be a substantial change in the way we build housing in this country to be more in tune with the self build project in Almere....if they don’t adapt they will die....it will be interesting to see if this happens!

E: Often the vernacular traditional methods of design can have a negative perception by either the community or developers or both who may aspire more towards what they believe is ‘modern’, how do you think the designer can mediate between aspiration and appropriateness?

M: This is a hard one.....Marcel [Vellinga](http://localsvsglobal.wordpress.com/2011/06/08/dr-marcel-vellinga-culture-and-tradition-local-vs-global-workshop-oxford/) says it’s quite patronising of us to go out to rural areas and tell people how they should build with their traditional vernacular construction techniques as it romanticizes the techniques and obviously the outputs, but doesn’t necessarily help people feel that they are moving out of poverty. I think that if architects/professionals can assist with hybridizing existing techniques and modern construction technologies to achieve the best of feeling modern and responding better to the local climate etc. then that’s the way forward...but until the whole world is prepared to live in homes like that I don’t really see how we can expect ‘poor’ people to live in ‘mud huts’ while we continue to live in houses made out of bricks and mortar!

E: Would you agree that local knowledge and architectural traditions can be overlooked due to this concept and that more emphasis should be placed on detecting these ideas and incorporating them in future design?

M: Yes, spend more time understanding local technologies and techniques but also understand available materials and costs of these both in financial and environmental terms, and work out the best solutions together with local people.

E: Do you think that development is taught and discussed widely enough within design and architectural education - how could / should this be improved?

M: Nope...but it’s flipping hard to teach this type of agenda to meet the RIBA criteria. This year it has been noted that our students have too many diagrams and not enough architecture in their portfolios, that Unit D students get a great education but they suffer because they have to meet the marking criteria on top of the stuff we teach, that addressing the ‘poverty agenda’ is not necessarily architectural enough and that it’s great that we have moved away from such extreme developmental problems.....that what the students design risks, not really being architecture as it is often too simplistic and not spatially complex enough .... This can be really disheartening and frustrating especially as Oxford Brookes is well known for the developmental agenda addressed in the DEP masters and the links with the undergraduate design studio that we run. I do often wonder what many of the other tutors think that DEP is really about, I worry that they believe that we all go off and design buildings for poor people!!!!! We also have the additional problem that 3rd year students tend not to choose our unit as there is the perception that students generally don’t get a first in our unit....as we focus too much on development issues and not enough on design development.

E: Do you have a favourite / most inspiring project, designer, writer, concept ... - if so what?

M: Not really.....although I do think the work that Homeless International do is pretty amazing and I am very interested to see how the approach that Alex Frediani has developed for the Capability Approach is going to impact on the way projects are run in the future.
Left: Mel (third from left) and Pete (second from right) with students at the Unit D exhibition space 2012

Below: Building Plot Workshop 2010 (Mel third from right)
Natalya Critchley is a British born artist who has lived and worked in Venezuela for over 30 years. By choosing industrial landscapes as a theme for several selected projects, a long standing partnership was formed between Natalya and Venezuelan based architects Urban Think Tank. This has led to collaborative work between the two being formed on numerous projects and teaching opportunities.

The bold and colorful theme Natalya chooses to represent the industrial landscapes are inspired by specific artists and styles; ‘These outlines of fantastic landscapes or sceneries are embellished and enlivened with colour and textures fed by my love of Persian art and textiles as well as the work of many artists that have been important references for me from Paul Klee to Philip Guston, Matisse to David Hockney’ (Critchley, 2009).

The industrial paintings produced concerning the San Agustin Metrocable project in Caracas allowed Natalya to get involved with the local community within the hillside slums. ‘Since working in the barrio and attending community meetings she has got invaluable connections with the community’ (Hagberg, 2010). This connection with the residents has allowed Natalya to conduct further workshops and create community based projects within the barrio. The activities held in the last few weeks [2011 workshops], helped the children to interact with their environment and eventually contribute to the rescue of their spaces (Brassesco, 2011).

Rogue was lucky enough to not only meet Natalya and discuss her work, but to spend time within the barrio working together. Her community projects revolve around the Caracas slums, engaging people with and improving their built environment, whilst addressing ownership and accountability issues through involving people in the process.

**WHO:** Natalya Critchley & Emily Lowry  
**WHEN:** 03.12.12

E: How did you get into the development field?

N: Through work in the visual arts, documenting development projects through drawing.

E: How would you describe your job / speciality / interest?

N: I am a visual artist/painter and have worked largely on the urban and industrial landscape.

E: Do you think you have a specific role within development?

N: I am very interested in
continuing to work with community groups in under-privileged areas i.e. Caracas barrios, combining practical organizational work in support of community groups with art/ ecology workshops to promote a different relationship with and use of the environment.

E: How important is what you do or perceived as important?

N: Extremely important. As an ecologically aware artist, low-tech and green technology solutions could greatly benefit people living in shanty towns in myriad, straight forward practical ways.

E: How do you think your work or design in general can address bigger issues such as governance / dependency & ownership / livelihood preservation?

N: There is currently a huge political debate and transformation underway in
Venezuela, whether you subscribe to the government programme or not, it is indisputably taking place. There have been some interesting initiatives in the last few years that have not all been carried out or continued, but the discussion is also an important process. I think my work can be a useful contribution that can start to address these issues. With our project for recuperation of a hillside site in San Agustín, which included a roofed plaza, rainwater collection system, vegetable garden, café, pilot project of dry latrine, the idea was to promote continuous use of the space with workshops and activities about the implementation of these technologies as well as providing local people with jobs and

Above: Natalya (centre) working with children to paint a mural in San Agustín
Right: ‘Hornos de cal/Lime oven Station’ Pastel and gouache on paper 100 x 70 cms 2009
recreational space.

E: How important do you think it is to involve end users i.e. communities, within design processes in a participatory capacity?

N: Important but slow. Education/information is fundamental to enable people to take informed decisions, but won’t make everyone into an architect overnight.

E: Would you agree that local rather than imported is always more desirable or effective, in terms of resources both in skills and materials?

N: In general there is much local know-how in building and design that is overlooked or looked down on. There are architects, like Fruto Vivas, who have done incredible work in making simple design solutions available to people to use/build for themselves.

E: Designing for developmental projects has been described by some as a process rather than a product i.e. it should incorporate long-term adaptability and gradual changes - do you think this a realistic goal?

N: I don’t know if it’s a realistic goal that usually depends on the resources and financing available but certainly a highly desirable way to work for sustainable achievements.

E: Do you think this is the way to design for development?

N: Yes, although sometimes urgent situations cannot wait and need immediate solutions.

E: Often the vernacular traditional methods of design can be negatively perceived by either the community or developers who may aspire more towards what they believe is ‘modern’. How do you think the designer can mediate between aspiration and appropriateness?

N: I don’t see it as a problem. Carlos Raul Villanueva was a good example of a modern architect who understood brilliantly how to adapt vernacular methods to new materials or vice versa.
There are some more recent architects who have done this very successfully, but it tends to be a middle class phenomenon, rather than for poorer people who build for themselves. These last would prefer modern design and materials but end up using simpler traditional solutions through necessity.

E: Would you agree that local knowledge and architectural traditions can be overlooked because of this and that more emphasis should be placed on detecting these ideas and incorporating them in future design?

N: Yes, it is still a struggle. But in the Indigenous Commission they did manage to convince them to fund schools built with traditional building techniques, wattle and daub type construction, walls of woven sticks, palm leaf rooves etc a few years back. There is still a lot to be done.

The government still builds very badly adapted cramped housing in rural locations, in the city it is hard to argue against densification, particularly in a city like Caracas which is so limited by it’s geography.

E: Do you have a favourite / most inspiring project, designer, writer, concept?

N: Fruto Vivas I admire greatly. Also like the idea of the Earthship. In spite of the hippy aura surrounding some of these movements, as a solution for housing in disaster zones like Haiti it could be really useful. I hope they manage to carry the project out.

Left: Drawing of the Ceiba Tree by schoolchildren in San Agustin for one of Natalya’s projects
Next: San Agustin Mural
First sighted at ‘Designing for the Future’, an exhibition held at the Victoria and Albert Museum, the ‘Recovery Toolkit’ is an intriguing product designed to assist with mental health problems. Designed by Mark Kobine, a product, furniture and interior designer who is currently Designer in Residence at Edinburgh College of Art, the toolkit was developed with mental health professionals and sufferers in order to provide an interactive aid to combat depression.

I was fortunate enough to meet Mark and we discussed the process of involving people within design, and the potential for this product specifically to address common issues found within developing areas or particularly, within post-disaster situations. Rogue felt that Mark was a great designer to interview as his products have an element of user interaction and involvement and clearly demonstrate a great attention and sensitivity to detail, material and craftsmanship, all on a very human scale.

WHO: Mark Kobine & Emily Lowry
WHEN: 17.10.12

E: How did you get into the development field?

M: Strictly speaking I’m not in development, but rather the design field. But design has, and should have, a significant role here, specifically in addressing the issues facing the developing world and proposing new solutions.

E: How would you describe your job / speciality / interest?

M: I work in Product Design, which has a very broad definition, but within this I am particularly interested in our relationship with objects and the psychology of that relationship. Also, key to most of the work I do is the materiality of the object and our interaction with it.

E: As a designer do you think you have a specific role within development? If so where do you fit in?

M: I see my role as to propose new and alternative solutions to existing and new problems.

E: How important is what you do or perceived as important?

M: I personally believe that design is underrated and only occasionally are innovative designs recognized for their importance and contribution.

E: How important do you think...
it is to involve end users i.e. communities, within design processes in a participatory capacity?

M: It’s critically important to involve the end user in your design process, as designs should be developed in tandem with the target audience. The Recovery Toolkit was a co-design project with a small group of expert users and this experience taught me the folly of the designer who thinks they know best. Designers need to be able to keep their ego in check and listen to their users. Designers are often asked to tackle problems far outside their area of expertise so it is critical for them to leverage the knowledge and experience of experts and end-users.

E: Would you agree that local rather than imported is always more desirable or effective, in terms of resources both in skills and materials?

M: Creating solutions from locally sourced materials has not only environmental benefits, but allows users to maintain, repair and make locally without reliance on external resources. However, there are great opportunities to be had from exploiting new and emerging technologies that may not be readily available locally.

E: Designing for developmental projects has been described by some as a process rather than a product i.e. it should incorporate long term adaptability and gradual changes - do you think this a realistic goal?

M: I can only talk in general terms here, but if long term adaptability and gradual change are key then these need to be incorporated into the design brief, so that they are addressed by the designer(s). The longer the term the harder it is to achieve a design, but these issues could be addressed by involving the end users within the design and development of the solution, so that they can adapt it in the future.

E: Often the vernacular traditional methods of design can have a negative perception by either the community or developers or both who may aspire more towards what they believe is ‘modern’. How do you think the designer can mediate between aspiration and appropriateness - or do they not need to?

M: To me a good designer is empathetic and sensitive to the user and their context. A designer cannot but help bring their own experience to their work, but a good one will develop the right solution for the problem rather than attempt to impose an external ideology. The user will have their own culture with its vernacular traditions and the final design must be sympathetic to these while simultaneously balancing the need to propose new solutions. This is really challenging, but it’s part of
on Design particularly interesting for its insight and common sense. Richard Wiseman I often read for accessible writing on psychology, creativity and behaviour. Thomas Heatherwick does astonishing things with material and processes that make you reassess your own work, but often the most inspirational design comes from unexpected places. I was amazed at the creativity of those caught up in the floods in Thailand in 2011 and particularly by ‘A Litre of Light’ by Illac Diaz.

E: Do you think that development is taught and discussed widely enough within design and architectural education?

From my own experience of Product Design education I have to say that it is not taught at all and needs to be. There are many great examples of design for developing countries and these are often held up as examples of ‘good design’. But the main issue facing designers in the UK is access to end users and first-hand experience of their environments. If we could tackle this issue we could create many more opportunities to design for these situations.

E: Do you have a favourite / most inspiring project, designer, writer, concept ... - if so what?

M: I find Don Norman’s writing
As an architecture student who had completed the Development and Emergency Practice Masters at Oxford Brookes University, Katie was selected due to her interest and competence in both the design field and developing environments. Known personally to Rogue, she has a wide range of practical experience and recently became involved with several extra curricular projects. As a future architect, presumably with a connection to development, we wanted to find out how she felt about these common themes.

**WHO: Katie Shute & Emily Lowry**  
**WHEN: 02.01.13**

**E:** How did you get into the development field?

**K:** My interest in development was fuelled by various voluntary projects, which I undertook in the developing world. These included teaching in primary schools in India and Malaysia, and constructing an AIDS clinic in Uganda. I followed up this interest by attending relevant conferences and workshops by ASF, CENDEP, RedR and EWB, before finally choosing to do the DEP specialisation as part of my Masters in Architecture at Oxford Brookes.

**E:** How would you describe your job / speciality / interest?

**K:** Coming from an architecture background, I would say that my speciality is in design and the built environment, within the field of development. After completing my studies, I would like to gain my qualification as an architect, and hopefully put my skills to use in the development sector. However, I am also very interested in the participatory side of development, and am currently conducting community participation in the UK as part of the ‘Our Place’ project for the Small Change Forum. This involves consulting with community groups and individuals from Blackbird Leys in Oxford in order to find out their likes and dislikes, which will influence future decisions made by the council within the area.

**E:** As a designer / architect / ... do you think you have a specific role within development? If so where do you fit in?

**K:** Yes definitely, I think that architects have some specific skills which are relevant to the field of development. Architects are able...
Left:
Katie (centre left) in Uganda;
Blackbird Leys Community Centre, Oxford;
Katie (centre) in Malaysia
to analyse and understand the different contexts in which they work, as well as synthesise various issues and complexities, a skill which is usually needed in many development projects. They are not only creative, and able to think spatially, but also have the ability to engage with people. With cities and megacities becoming increasingly common in development and emergency response projects, I feel that it is important to have people such as architects, urban designers, engineers, and planners who have an understanding of the physical environment as well as the social, cultural and economic factors present.

E: How important do you think it is to involve end users i.e. communities, within design processes in a participatory capacity?

K: I think that involving end users within design processes is absolutely vital because it leads to long term success and sustainability. It also helps to give ownership of the process to the end users, therefore increasing their overall satisfaction with the end product. Participation is not always regarded as a necessity by governments, agencies and NGOs, because it is perceived to be more time-consuming and expensive. However without any participation, how can a designer/architect/development practitioner know what is most needed by a community?

E: Would you agree that local rather than imported is always more desirable or effective, in terms of resources both in skills and materials?

K: Utilising local skills will help to boost the local economy, it will give local people ownership of projects, and it will help to build the capacity and resilience of a community. A more sustainable option is to use local materials, if appropriate and readily available, as this will not only help the economy but also the environment. With regards to architecture, using the local vernacular is often also important in order to end up with designs which are more socially and culturally sensitive.

E: Designing for developmental projects has been described by some as a process rather than a product i.e. it should incorporate long term adaptability and gradual changes - do you think this a realistic goal?

K: Yes, I think that this is a realistic goal, but only when the community is involved throughout the design process. Most buildings in the developing world are produced
by communities themselves and change as their situations and needs change. Therefore, taking long-term adaptability into account is very important. It is essential that architects working in development focus much more on the process they use to get to the end product, ie. how they can effectively mobilise people, how their designs can act as catalysts for future changes and how they can be facilitators to design, rather than the designers themselves.

E: Do you think this is the way to design for development?

K: Yes, I think it is the way forward, but there needs to be more emphasis on this in education for design professionals. Otherwise, they will find that their ‘Western’ way of working could have some negative impacts.

E: Often the vernacular traditional methods of design can have a negative perception by either the community or developers or both who may aspire more towards what they believe is ‘modern’, how do you think the designer can mediate between aspiration and appropriateness - or do they not need to?

K: This issue can be very difficult to resolve … however, I believe that the designer does have a role to try to emphasise the importance of the vernacular (if this is the most appropriate option). This could be shown by explaining the benefits of using local resources to reduce cost and improve the economy and environment. I think that one of the best ways of promoting vernacular methods is to provide good examples of where they are used in quality design …

E: Would you agree that local knowledge and architectural traditions can be overlooked due to this concept and that more emphasis should be placed on detecting these ideas and incorporating them in future design?

K: Yes, they can be overlooked, as vernacular buildings are often associated with poverty while modern ones are associated with wealth. But I definitely agree that local knowledge and traditions should be incorporated into as many designs as possible, whether for the wealthy or poor.

E: Do you think that development is taught and discussed widely enough within design and architectural education - how could / should this be improved?

K: No, it is not currently taught or even discussed widely enough.
Oxford Brookes is one of only a tiny handful of UK universities, which take development issues into account within architectural education. Architects are usually taught to aim for a final product, a permanent building, which is often perceived to be fixed and not adaptable. However this goes against the preferred way of working in development, where the focus should be on process, rather than product. Therefore, it is important to encourage more architecture students to engage in these issues, particularly because they relate to 95% of the built environment worldwide. I think that courses such as the new one which ASF-UK offers to built environment professionals, are the right way that education should be heading, however there should be more of these developed and readily available to architects.

E: Do you have a favourite / most inspiring project, designer, writer, concept?

K: One project which I find really inspirational is ‘Handmade School’ by Anna Heringer and Eike Roswag, a building which showcases vernacular methods through high quality design. I am particularly impressed by the innovative uses of traditional materials in the project, as well as the use of local craftsmen, and involvement of the local community.
Certificate of Advanced Studies in Disaster Risk Reduction

Preparatory Phase, E-Learning
3 – 30 September 2012
EPFL, LAUSANNE, SWITZERLAND
8 – 19 October 2012
Field Work, Bangladesh
24 Nov. – 2 Dec. 2012
Individual Project

Application Deadline
June 10, 2012

http://cooperation.epfl.ch

CONTACT
cdrr@epfl.ch
+ 41 21 693 60 48

COOPERATION & DEVELOPMENT CENTER
UNESCO Chair in Technologies for Development

VULNERABILITIES & CAPACITIES
CLIMATE CHANGE

Switzerland - Bangladesh

Contact: cdrr@epfl.ch
+ 41 21 693 60 48

http://cooperation.epfl.ch
The next few pages identify a great variety of projects worldwide which we believe provide a significant contribution both to the world of development but also design. These two areas are often viewed as incompatible and an unlikely combination, however we at Rogue could not disagree more, and truly believe that good design should work in harmony with good development. By showcasing these projects, not only should designers be enlightened by what they can achieve within a developmental setting, but those already working within development should gain a better understanding of the crucial contribution good design can make. Something which, unfortunately, is commonly underestimated.
Ecotourism is a phrase that seems to come up more and more. Whether or not the projects it refers to are truly sensitive and appropriate to the environment they operate within is difficult to measure. We, at Rogue, believe that this particular Laotian case study demonstrates key concepts of using clever, appropriate design to promote considered and manageable development.

In simple terms, this project and the potential outcome of future work has led to the possibility for
communities to develop through providing stable livelihoods, improving skills, and generating communal income. All of which contribute to building capacity and a reduction in vulnerability, ultimately increasing opportunities.

Laos as a country is becoming increasingly well known for promoting and incorporating the idea of ‘Ecotourism’. The key concept being to welcome tourists, but on a strict basis that there is minimal impact to the environment and natural resources. In general Laos is relatively undeveloped, particularly towards the north, where one notably beautiful area, Luang Prabang, has been declared a UNESCO heritage site.
Previous: Traditional Village in Luang Prabang

Left: Waterfalls in Luang Prabang
Monks relaxing at a temple, Luang Prabang

Opposite: Buddhist Shrine in Luang Prabang;
Luang Prabang is an outstanding example of the fusion of traditional architecture and Lao urban structures with those built by the European colonial authorities in the 19th and 20th centuries. Its unique, remarkably well-preserved townscape illustrates a key stage in the blending of these two distinct cultural traditions. (Advisory Body Evaluation, UNESCO n.d.)

It was whilst visiting Luang Prabang that Rogue became aware of ‘Tiger Trail Outdoor Adventure’ and the ‘Fair Trek Fund’. Tiger Trail is one of the leading tour operators in the area, with a keen focus on sustainable tourism (Tiger Trail, 2012). Upon further investigation we found that the director grew up in one of the local villages and, as such, a new branch of the company was being developed to further benefit these communities. (Dahm, 2012).

I was lucky enough to meet Ms. Yoxa Dahm, Responsible Tourism Manager at Tiger Trail, who generously explained their current projects and future plans.
Previous:
Building the brick walls

Left:
Gathering clay;
Preparing the clay for bricks;
Creating the clay bricks

Opposite:
Finished school building
in the community, rather than an ‘outsider’.

A needs assessment was carried out and used to inform the design; ‘Cooperation with local communities reveals that education for their children is always a top priority in their future developmental plans ... The only school in these villages is a bamboo hut which can host and teach only small children, aged between 4-8 years. The older ones have to walk for almost two hours to the nearest available secondary school’ (Tiger Trail, 2012).

This difficulty in accessing education was recognized as the top priority for the villagers ‘Community members identified their most pressing needs ... From this first step, Fair Trek created a shared commitment with the villagers to achieve their main goal: improving educational opportunities for youth’ (Okoye, 2011). Once it became apparent that a school would bring great benefit to the village and also provide a marketable venture for Tiger Trail, it was decided that The Fair Trek Fund could contribute to the project. The Fair Trek Fund was set up by the government and is managed through local authorities to benefit seven surrounding villages.

A village meeting was called to present the project, not only allowing a platform to raise queries and concerns, but also to manage expectations. Further consultation was undertaken with the selected village chief and land owner whose land the school would be built on. Tiger Trail recognized that through involving the community early on in the project, they could contribute, pose questions and ideas, and potentially be more accepting of the development; ‘Villagers’ participation and support of the project is central to its success’ (Okoye, 2011).

CONSTRUCTION
One of the great benefits to the community of working alongside Tiger Trail on this project, was the provision of tourists, not just enthusiastic to help build the school, but willing to pay for the privilege. World Volunteer, a partner of Tiger Trail provided a steady stream of volunteers to help build the school alongside the locals as part of an eco-tour programme, which also included other income generating options such as homestays, prepared meals, and local handicrafts.

One key design aspect that contributed to this project’s success was the incorporation of clay walls. Clay, mud or adobe buildings have a long tradition in many countries and regions, of similar climates such as China,
Preparing the school foundations; Village school children
African and Arabic countries (Tiger Trail, 2012). Although not a local technique, by using clay, local resources were used, costs were minimal, natural materials utilized and the construction technique allowed for unskilled workers. Women, children and even tourists with a complete lack of practical experience could also make significant contributions and learn ‘on the job’.

Another advantage of using clay as a building material was to help control humidity levels, temperature and sound. The clay demonstrates the successful integration of an understanding of local climate with the use of accessible resources and an introduction to new techniques.

A clay building expert was enlisted to teach the community and volunteers the basics of clay construction. The basic process of creating clay bricks builds capacity and demonstrates to the community a new way of construction which could be adapted and interpreted independently of any organisation, allowing the community to build future projects using this technique.

The roof also had to be suited to the local climate. Constructed from wood and bamboo, a traditional Laotian method, the roof has a large overhang which controls sunlight and shading, making the internal spaces noticeably cooler. A technique which be seen in many Laotian temples and prominent buildings throughout the local area.

As Laos has a communist government, strict rules had to be adhered to whilst designing the public school. The incorporation of a new clay brick technique meant that the school was closely monitored by the authorities, who at one visit ordered the painting over of a school wall mural, due to suspicions of hidden meanings within it! (Dahm, 2012).

**RESPONSE**

Once the school had been constructed, the response from the village was demonstrated in a traditional Laos Baci Ceremony. ‘The ceremony was emceed by one of the Nam Bak Education Office officials. Speeches were given by the Naluang village head, Tiger Trail’s own Markus Neuer and Mr. Khamchaen, and an official representing the Nam Bak school district. Gifts and awards were exchanged in representation of the gratefulness of each involved entity’ (Tiger Trail, 2012).
LONG TERM MANAGEMENT + FUTURE PROJECTS

Tiger Trail, recognizes that this project has to have a long term strategy if the school is going to be suitably managed and maintained. Luckily the local Laos communities already operate within fixed social structures, which take responsibility for the projects.

The success of the school project has led to the development of an eco-bungalow proposal which, following the same principles demonstrated in the clay school project should greatly benefit the communities in which they are situated. The bungalows will be managed by a role rotation of families interested in taking part in servicing the buildings such as cleaning and cooking. When completed, the bungalow will belong to and be the responsibility of the villagers of Long Lao Mai. Our [Tiger Trail] only role in the future will be to bring tourists to this remote area via marketing and the promotion of economic development (Tiger Trail, 2012).

SUMMARY

This project demonstrates how communities can be carefully developed and supported through local tourism and partnership. The introduction of tourists to a remote rural village has the obvious benefits of marketing local products and providing services such as meals and homestays to generate stable incomes. However underneath the surface bigger issues are beginning to be addressed such as skill development in hospitality, construction and education. Collective social structures were maintained and allowed to voice concerns. The community organized itself in order to maintain control of the project and over how their villages could develop.

It is not taken for granted that all communities will support attracting tourism to their villages. It is crucial that both parties are aware of the impact ecotourism can bring and how to successfully control and manage it. The previous Tourism Manager at Tiger Trail, Winna Bunkum, commented at the beginning of the Clay School Project that; “Since the start, they had to agree about what we are building and when, what they will have to do, what we will have to do, such as managing the space for the activities. This project will make the village so busy and full of people for the time... and they accepted that,” (cited in Okoye, 2011).

‘We have to consider the village capacity, needs, and willingness to partake; our capacity to collect enough funds; the volunteer work force and marketability to tourists ... This is why we have joined together with a number of stakeholders over the last several years to set up a simple and clear way to implement community-based tourism that benefits all involved, including the communities, government, visitors and participating companies. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** is adopted as a principle of our operation and implemented by skilled employees having experience in responsible tourism development to ensure minimization of negative impacts of tourism as well as maximization of the positive one’ (Tiger Trail, 2012).

The Clay School Project, demonstrates that with careful and well thought through design, traditional building techniques can be improved and new ones adopted in order to create usable, affordable and enjoyable spaces. Rogue strongly believe that careful consideration must be given to developing these projects as, with such strong culture and customs, Laos is still such a traditional and beautifully preserved area of the world. However the work that Tiger Trail have done so far in local villages is commendable and we hope it continues in such a sensitive and delicate manner, whereby the communities themselves are truly in control.
Following the recent financial crash, Detroit was one of the worst affected cities in the United States. This significantly impacted the state of housing, causing repercussions through entire neighborhoods; ‘forced wholesale foreclosures among people unable to pay their mortgages or who walked away from houses that fell to a fraction of the value of the loans they had taken out on them. Banks are selling off properties in the worst neighborhoods, which are usually surrounded by empty and wrecked housing, for a few dollars each’ (McGreal, 2010).

With houses left in a state of dereliction and the threat of demolition looming as plans to create urban farms on their land were formed, something had to be done to try and save these good quality houses and neighborhoods that were once so full of life. This is where Design 99 stepped in. Led by Gina Reichert, an architect, and Mitch Cope an artist and independent curator, ‘Design 99 seeks out opportunities to experiment with art and design within their community’ (visitdesign99.com, 2012).

The company purchased a typical neighborhood house, naming it ‘The Power House’, with the intention of sparking regeneration within the local area, using it as an inspirational example of how the community could restore their homes and revitalize the
neighbourhood.

Known as ‘The house that started it all’, the Power House has two specific purposes and meanings. ‘First to generate its own electricity from solar and wind power which can be transferred to adjacent properties, creating a localized power grid. Secondly taking control of ones own community by becoming an example of self reliance, sustainability and creative problem solving through education, communication and increased diversification of the neighborhood’ (powerhouseproductions.org, 2012).

Since 2008, the Power House project is continually being developed as a prototype for both affordable and hi-tech building systems and a catalyst which could transform the entire community. Design 99 have also teamed up with Dutch Arts organization Fonds BKVB to invite international artists to contribute within the local area. Reichert and Cope subsequently founded Power House Productions, a nonprofit organization focussed on neighborhood stabilization through art and culture. Furthermore, in cooperation with Patizan Public, the Power House hosts Architects for Residency sessions working in the community.

The project has extended throughout the neighbourhood regenerating and repurposing houses to provide beneficial facilities for the community. For example the Squash House had transformed a derelict house into a space for playing racquet sports and the Sound House is used to create music responding to the artist-designed interior.

Rogue believe that this project has gone to great lengths in order to save and regenerate a community that might otherwise be neglected. This particular house serves as a base for the
Previous:
The Power House
Opposite:
Debris and salvaged materials in the neighbourhood
House for sale for $100 in Detroit
Right:
Sketch of the power house
Power house collage
Mitch Cope & Gina Reichert
Community to gather acts as a visual public demonstration of investment being made within the area. This aspect, combined with the introduction of sustainable low cost energy solutions benefitting multiple houses offers inspiration in a potentially discouraging environment. The introduction of international artists and architects also brings a wave of new ideas and enthusiasm to further engage and revitalize the neighborhood.

We applaud Design 99 for taking on a challenging environment and actively trying to break the cycle, which has resulted in evictions, foreclosures and the abandonment of suitable housing. They seen beyond the abandoned streets and houses and recognize potential and value; ‘In all a place that symbolizes hopefulness and curiosity by integrating a complex web of social and artistic ideas into a neighborhood that might otherwise end up into a typical cycle of decay and criminality’ (visitdesign99.com, 2012).

Through working with the community and establishing a local storefront as a base, Design 99 are able to address some of the bigger issues surrounding the problems currently occurring in Detroit. This multifaceted approach is something which Luis Croquet, MOCADetroit Director and Chief Curator praises them for; “Design 99’s work explores the edges of art practice, utilizing, design, architecture, found materials and utilitarian objects to propose creative solutions to complex problems. Their practice has at its core the belief that transformation can happen in a natural way, if we only take a look, think out-of-the-box and take action.” (2010).
Rogue want to celebrate designers whose work is both practical and inspiring. We believe that through his use of low-tech recycled materials, Domingos Totora is not only making a remarkable contribution to the world of contemporary design, but also to the world of sustainability and development.
Domingos Totora is a Brazilian designer working in the hillside city of Maria de Fe. Inspired by the nature that surrounds his studio, Totora chose cardboard as the source material for his projects; ‘Starting with recycled cardboard he creates objects and sculptures where beauty is inseparable from function, granting an artistic aura to common everyday objects’ (Totora, 2012).

The work not only combines elegant form and texture, but also refers back to its original state through its wooden-like materiality. ‘Although making furniture with cardboard is nothing new, Totora’s process and designs are a fresh approach’ (Alvarado, 2011). He has cleverly incorporated a material found in abundance worldwide that is often considered a waste product. We believe that although not strictly a developmental project, the use of a waste material as a key aspect of the design, could allow the process to be applied in a developmental situation, hopefully to the same level of success.

It is clear that Totora enjoys and appreciates the handmade process required in creating his work; ‘In a certified sustainable process, recycled cardboard is broken up into small pieces and turned into a pulp that serves as the base material for furniture, objects and sculptural pieces that are molded by hand, dried in the sun and finished to perfection. In this beautiful and labor intensive process, the cardboard which originated as wood, essentially is brought back full cycle by taking on a wood-like quality again. We believe sustainability happens through actions and not words’ (Totora, 2012). It is this love and care that is embodied in the beauty of the final product.

This project demonstrates that it is possible to be successful in both design and development, and if carefully negotiated, the end result can be incredibly innovative and inspiring.
DESIGN = FUTURE PREPARATION
Mohammed Rezwan is a Bangladeshi Architect and founder of Shidhulai Swanirvar Sangstha, a non-profit organization. He has received much publicity for his work including international awards, television appearances, newspaper features and even starred in a documentary film; “Easy Like Water” directed by Glenn Baker in collaboration with the Sundance Institute.

The reason Mohammed Rezwan is receiving so much global attention and even being hailed as Bangladesh’s “Noah” (docucinema.com, 2012), is his design and creation of ‘Community Lifeboats’. This project resulted from having witnessed firsthand the annual floods that impact one-third of Bangladesh. With sea levels rising 20 percent of land is predicted to be underwater by 2050 (Kimmelman, 2011), Rezwan recognized the urgent need for a solution to cope with the rising water.

The first community lifeboat formed a floating school, created by Rezwan’s organisation in 2002. “If the children cannot come to school, I thought the school should go to them,” he explains’ (docucinema.com, 2012). Working with boat builders, Rezwan modifies traditional flat-
bottom riverboats using local materials and building methods. Sitting low in water, they incorporate a metal truss to allow for column-free open spaces, flexible wooden floors, higher ceilings, and waterproof roofs outfitted with solar photovoltaic panels. (designother90.org, 2012).

In a recent interview with WISE, an international, multi-sectoral education initiative, Rezwan describes the great impact the floating schools have had in improving education, and also the need for future development.

Rezwan: In Bangladesh, the pressure on land is overwhelming and the poor often migrate to live in remote areas close to the river. In these areas, there is limited or no access to education, training and resources. During the heavy rains, students cannot attend school due to floods, which increases the dropout rates. Floating schools, libraries and training centers provide primary education (up to grade IV), books, information and agricultural training. Our program ensures year-round schooling to children, thus lowering the school dropout rate. Girls and young women also take full advantage of the education and information facilities that this project delivers right to their doorsteps. Furthermore, the proximity of these facilities allays the concerns of their parents and guardians. We have also observed a fall in the number of early marriages as girls and women have access to basic women’s rights education. Parents and farmers in the area also have access to appropriate training and information that help increase family income. This initiative is also raising awareness of how to adapt to climate change in flood-prone communities.
Since the initial success of the floating schools, the project has expanded greatly, incorporating other community services using the same modest technique. Rezwan has also designed cluster housing outfitted with cooking facilities and toilets and a three-tier farming structure built on floating platforms. The floating farm’s first tier is a planting bed made of water hyacinth and a bamboo truss for growing vegetables, beneath which fish are raised within net enclosures, while poultry can be raised on the top tier. (designother90.org, 2012).

Shidhulai currently operates fifty-four floating schools, libraries, health clinics, and a training center for parents, serving close to 90,000 families. He is also the inventor of the “solar water farming” technique, as well as the “bamboo, bottle and siren” flood warning system and the SuryaHurricane solar lantern. (wise-qatar.org, 2011).

This forward thinking yet affordable design has proven a success amongst the communities in which it has been implemented. Rezwan has also been internationally recognized for finding a solution to the increasingly serious problem of climate change. This project has multiple benefits for a potentially very wide range of communities; ‘With a concept that is elegant and home-grown, Rezwan is helping his country adapt to the new climate reality—and cultivating the next generation of problem solvers (sundance.org, 2010).

These boats, whilst incorporating electricity and high speed internet amongst other modern day comforts, remain typically Bangladeshi in style, allowing
Class being held within one of the floating schools
them a certain amount of individuality and character; “Traditional materials, local building techniques and renewable energy sources produced a model of contextual design” (Kimmelman, 2011).

Paul Rose, a BBC reporter commented on his time spent with Reman aboard the two storey floating library;

’I asked a teenaged reader what she thought of the library. Rezwan translated: “I love to study here and take books home.” Rezwan’s non-profit organisation, Shidhulai, also provides solar lights free of charge. I was happy that the technician took only a quick break from his soldering to show me the charging system and solar units, as he had people waiting to swap their flat batteries for charged ones’.

Rose also discusses future projects with Rezwan, his ideas are to further develop a system of floating agriculture through technological advances;

‘In the south, we had floating gardens 400 years ago, so it’s nothing new. We’ll scale up the system and make it work. The video conferencing session onboard the education boat was linking an agricultural scientist here at the front of the boat with a distant farmer. Projected onto the screen for the 40 farmers was both sides of the video call and a display of a pest’s life cycle and instructions on killing it without using commercial pesticides’. (Rose, 2009).

Clearly the boats are about more than dealing with rising water levels. Capacity building, disaster risk reduction, livelihood diversification and improving overall access are just a few of the potential benefits this project is beginning to address and further promote.

To combine community buildings and boats within areas vulnerable to flooding may seem like an obvious solution. When discussing the Design With the Other 90 Percent: Cities exhibiton at the UN, Michael Kimmelman, a journalist for the New York Times commented; ‘The objects here tend to look rugged and sometimes embarrassingly simple, as in “Why hadn’t anyone come up with that idea before?” Their beauty lies elsewhere: in providing economical, smart solutions to address the problems of millions of the world’s poorest people’ (2011).

Whilst Rogue concurs that simple design solutions can address a great variety of issues surrounding some of the most vulnerable people worldwide, their designs don’t necessarily have to be “embarrassingly simple”. What we hope is that designs like Rezman’s Community Lifeboats can bridge the two worlds of design and development. Not only do they provide vital services for far reaching communities against the threat of climate change, but the locally
sourced materials and vernacular design elements combined with modern comforts, offer a unique solution which brings Bangladeshi traditions into the 21st Century.
DESIGN = SAFETY

The Improved Clay Stove

[Diagram showing the design and dimensions of the stove]

Fuel-efficient stove: plan

- Stove walls made from animal dung and river clay
- The fire is placed under the cooking pot
- Diameter approximately 50cm
- Three bricks form a rest for the cooking pot
- Hole for firewood and to let air in
Design is not always thought of as an element which can significantly impact on safety. Possibly the majority of people think of it as an add-on or unessential aspect of a project. However Practical Action have demonstrated through their ‘improved clay stove’ project in the Sudan that not only can design ease and improve the daily life of developing communities, but it can also significantly impact their lives with regard to safety.

In the Sudan, as with many developing countries, cooking is left to the women and they are also responsible for gathering materials necessary to heat their stoves. A shortage of fuel within sparse environments often results in women having to travel long distances to access firewood, greatly impacting daily schedules. The increasing use of tree roots as fuel for cooking within the Sudan reduces the ability for trees to regrow and, rather worryingly, exposes the women and their families to potentially deadly smoke fumes. (postconflict.unep 2002).

The real threat to women during their search for firewood is the potential for attack and conflict; ‘Gathering fuel is generally women’s work, but is fraught with dangers; they gamble with the risk of rape and life threatening attacks during their search for much needed firewood, in order to feed
Above: simple stages of creating the new clay stoves
Right: Sudanese women celebrating with the new stoves that they have made and decorated
resources. Through burning less wood, smoke emissions are significantly reduced, improving the level of health usually affected through traditional cooking methods.

It is estimated that the improved clay stove is 55-60% more fuel efficient. Beginning in Al Fashir in 2000, this project had expanded by 2007 to training over 3000 women in the manufacture of the clay stove. Alongside an educational programme providing fuel saving tips such as pre-soaking beans before cooking, using a weighted lid and limiting air supply to the fire, this project has been successful in negotiating between traditional methods and familiarities and safer more sustainable and efficient modern techniques. (practicalaction.org)

The design of the cooker is purposefully basic to allow for its training and implementation throughout a wide community. Using locally available materials, just brick and clay, the stoves can be made in a few very simple stages. The low-tech nature of this product allows many people to be involved, even children can contribute to making the stoves. The newly acquired skills, stove making and clay moulding, may also allow future development in terms of livelihood opportunities or improving the efficiency of other traditional methods.

This is clearly not a project illustrating complex and technical design ideas. However the careful readjustment of the traditional clay stove, alongside a sensitivity to environment and user, has allowed Practical Action to implement better health and safety within developing countries. This project demonstrates that even very simple, design modifications can make an enormous impact on people’s daily lives.

Unfortunately this situation is not unique to the Sudan and can be found in many situations, especially exacerbated by the introduction of refugees in an environment with already scarce resources; ‘prior to the banning of firewood collection [by UNHCR], refugee women faced perils such as the threat of rape, physical assault by Turkana/hostile fellow refugee communities, encounters with dangerous snakes and a general pressure on time to execute myriad domestic chores’ (Owiti, 2003). As a response to this serious issue, Practical Action decided to step in to assist through the improved design of the traditional Sudanese clay stove.

The improved clay stove is specifically designed to be more fuel-efficient, affordable and easy to use. The less firewood needed, the less hazardous trips required. This also allows trees more opportunity to grow which, over time, should increase available resources.
Winner of the 2010 World Architecture Festival ‘House’ Category, judges commented on A Forest for a Moon Dazzler that; ‘Garcia Saxe created a home for her [his mother] to occupy alone, while also satisfying his inventive curiosity with a new form of bamboo Moucharabieh screen that responded to movement and light’ (worldarchitecturefestival.com, 2010).

For Benjamin Garcia Saxe, this project had a strong emotional association, as it was designed and self built for his mother, ‘This house for my mom Helen is the culmination of a lifelong dream to construct a place where my mom, my brother, and I can be together’ (benjaminingarciasaxe.com, 2012). His mother had previously lived separately in a home constructed with tree trunks, mosquito nets and tin, ‘She then placed her bed in a corner of this house to watch the moon as she went to bed, and told me that she remembers both my brother and I every night as she watches the moon’
Therefore the connection with nature, the moon in particular became a key concept within the design of her house.

Through careful design and inventiveness, Garcia Saxe managed to construct a simple house in Costa Rica, costing just $40,000 using 4000 pieces of bamboo from a nearby family farm. Every piece was submerged in diesel to cure it and left to dry under shade. Using burlap and movable shutter doors, the walls of the house can adapt to create various internal environments modifying air flow, light and, importantly, views outwards and upwards towards the moon. The bamboo infill walls are stabilized with poured concrete foundations, steel columns and beams bought from a local hardware store, and finished with a corrugated tin roof.

The use of simple bamboo pieces to create an affordable and basic technology which allows the house to adjust to the changing climate is incredibly innovative and inspiring. Often adapting...
to varying climates and cultures, whilst keeping materials local and affordable, is a challenge faced by many in the development sector. However Garcia Saxe has demonstrated that with a certain level of design experimentation and curiosity, vernacular traditional styles and methods can be remodelled to provide compelling and enchanting architecture on an affordable scale.

In his description of the project on various design websites, Garcia Saxe discussed the meaning and significance of the house in a very poetic and sensitive manner; ‘Inspired by her routine I have given her an internal protected forest of bamboo. At night the cone-like surface of her new home opens to the moon and reminds her that it is me who is holding it in space as she goes calmly to sleep’ (architecturenewsplus.com, 2012).
‘There is, however another definition of design as intentional problem-solving ... Coming from all over the world, these men and women are “societal entrepreneurs” who use design to help alleviate the suffering of those lacking even the basic necessities. These designers recognize that by actively understanding the available resources, tools, desires, and immediate needs of their potential users - how they live and work - they can design simple, functional, and potentially open-source objects and systems that will enable the users to become empowered, self-supporting entrepreneurs in their own right.’

(Bloemink, cited in Smith, 2007, p.6).
This body of research has covered a wide range of concepts and projects relating to developmental design, from which several themes have been highlighted.

**Discussion:**

1. Design is Important

As the case studies show, good design can make a significant contribution to the world of development. Whether it takes the form of large-scale architecture and urban planning or smaller product or graphic designs, designers can make a difference when it comes to reducing vulnerabilities and alleviating the affects of poverty.

Highlighted in the San Agustin research was the need for mid-scale design projects especially in regards to safety, for example the school wall could be simply adjusted so that the niche no longer attracts gun crime. Introducing street lighting and a slight reconfiguration of the staircases would also contribute to a safer environment, particularly at night. The director of the school was trying to encourage parents to modify the school wall, as many had construction experience. It is hoped that having taken action and organized the community throughout the project work, an attitude of self mobilization may have been reinforced, triggering the residents to be pro-active in the future.

Urban Think Tank have made great advances in improving opportunities for barrio residents through designing and constructing the Caracas metrocable. This has been greatly beneficial in connecting barrio residents with the city. Further direct benefits include a decrease in the number of traffic accidents, significantly affecting the wellbeing of residents. This is something Wright reinforces; ‘Architecture cannot solve the multifarious, deep seeded problems of poverty and inequality. There will never be a ‘bilbao’ effect in a barrio. Yet design interventions can affect peoples’ lives and momentarily efface boundaries between the real and the possible.’ (cited in Brillembourg et al, 2005, p.80).

All of our interviewees agreed that their work or the work of other designers is extremely important to development and in many cases underrated. There was also a general consensus that developmental work is not often at the forefront of design particularly within architectural education, the notion of which automatically questions its validity.

Domingos Totora’s work indicates how considerate material choices can provide low-tech design solutions using a global waste product. Thus contributing to the world of sustainability, whilst providing affordable products and income generating opportunities. The Ecooler also offered a similar effect, by taking traditional and local concepts and adapting them to suit a changing climate. The use of clay in a modular system creates a product which can be made by communities on a domestic scale with low cost materials.

As demonstrated, design has an important role to play in a rapidly evolving world, however, it is important that those involved continue to adapt accordingly; ‘This is where architects can add value ... as social agents who understand the long-term needs of a multitude of others ... and provide intelligent solutions to even more complex problems associated with social structures, technology and design’ (Fisher and Gamble, 2012, p.47).

Therefore, it is vital that designers allow their role to be developed in order that these carefully mastered skills create work of great significance.

2. Education of Designers

As discussed in ‘Key Issues’ many architects view developmental work as unglamorous (Hamdi, 2004) or unrewarding (Polak, 2007), resulting in an apparent reluctance for designers to get involved. Ramirez states that traditional building techniques are ‘all too often ignored or disregarded by professionals and academics (cited in Cuellar, 2012, p.22).

‘... design interventions can affect peoples’ lives and momentarily efface boundaries between the real and the possible.’
‘You do not need a degree in engineering or architecture to learn how to talk and listen to poor people as customers’

The recent Cooper-Hewitt exhibition at the U.N. demonstrates a clear interest in the work designers are doing in developing environments and made great strides in illustrating, to a wider audience, the contribution they can make in dealing with issues surrounding poverty. Polak argues that it is not only professionals who should be involved; ‘You do not need a degree in engineering or architecture to learn how to talk and listen to poor people as customers’ (cited in Smith, 2007, p.19). The subsequent exhibition book helped to ‘spark an international dialogue about how design could improve the lives of poor and marginalized communities around the world’ (Smith, 2011, Foreword). The Rogue have presented projects in a similar vein, in the hope of moving towards the shared goal of raising awareness and inspiring future work.

Community incorporated designing has been discussed more publicly in recent years; ‘... the importance of cross-cultural and interdisciplinary collaborations to tackle the housing problem, calling for the education of ‘enablers’ who can work in the training of local communities to work on their own houses’ (Oliver, 2003 cited in Cuellar, 2012, p.14). It is the traditional autocratic role of designers, characterised by Howard Roark in The Fountainhead (1943) that needs to be addressed.

As Studio Weave and ORE both stated, authorship of projects, for them, is not an issue that could prevent the integration of communities within their work. It is this attitude that first needs to be adopted in order to enable participatory community based projects to be successful.

As the role of the designer changes, so should the education they receive. Kinnear commented on how incorporating a developmental aspect within architectural education needs to be addressed, not only through universities but greater professional bodies arguing that ‘it's flipping hard to teach this type of agenda to meet the RIBA criteria’ (2012). The need for additional education relating to this field is further endorsed through the interviews with Kobine and Shute; ‘From my own experience of Product Design education I have to say that it is not taught at all and needs to be’ (Kobine, 2012); ‘It is not currently taught or even discussed widely enough ... Architects are usually taught to aim for a final product ... However this goes against the preferred way of working in development’ (Shute, 2012).

There are indicators suggesting these ideas may already be infiltrating wider professional bodies, for example, the support for community participation from official organizations such as the RIBA and CABE. The introduction of the Localism Bill in December 2010 allows ‘decisions that affect local people to be made at a local level’ (Fisher and Gamble, 2012, p.32). Kickstarter, a crowdfunding website, has ‘been a platform for more than $100million of funding for projects in areas of art, design, film, food and music’ (Ricker, 2011, cited in Fisher and Gamble, 2012, p.41). de Rosee & Sa and Carmody Groarke are two practices who do not traditionally work in a community driven approach, however the Brook Green Pavilion and 7/7 Memorial suggest a move towards a facilitative role, indicating a greater trend within non-developmental practices. This is something Studio Weave believe to be essential and question why it is not currently common practice (Ahn, 2012). It is the mere presence of these projects and discussions that demonstrate an overall shift in the architectural profession and the process of designing in the future.

3 Community Involvement

Appropriate

The engagement of communities within developmental work is crucial if the project is to be effective and sustainable long term. Frank Chimero’s work, calling for People Centred Design questions the traditional top down approach of the designer by emphasizing the need for people to be involved and recognized as key stakeholders both in the process and final product. It is this involvement which will allow architects and designers to harness local knowledge, thus helping to ensure that projects are not only appropriate, but efficient in terms of resources and impact.

‘Utilizing local knowledge is critical for successful design’ (Smith, 2011, p.16). As explored in ‘Key Issues’, a lack of both cultural and climatic awareness has led to projects being ineffective or abandoned altogether. Traditional materials and techniques are often improved through generations, making them more suitable to the climate. This is where communities can advise on aspects such as appropriate building techniques and materials, hopefully creating comfortable and beneficial
outcomes. By using local materials, communities are likely to be familiar and comfortable using them, enabling future maintenance and ownership. Due to the nature of humanitarian reconstruction it may be unrealistic to expect this process to be undertaken post-disaster. However, Cuny argued that a link must be made between long-term development and emergency response through design.

Vernacular

Vellinga and Asquith argue that ‘the study of vernacular architecture can offer a better understanding of the nature of traditions and their dynamism, an insight that may help to identify how to build an appropriate and sustainable built environment’ (2006, p.47). Oliver agrees stating ‘Vernacular Architecture has been identified as a valuable source of information with huge potential to give answers to face the current housing situation’ (2003, p.3).

The issue of vernacular was also raised during the ‘Interviews’ section. Critchley commented on progress by the Indigenous Commission of Venezuela to fund schools with traditional daub and palm leaf techniques. Kobine stated that community involvement was likely to guide the designer through suitable design choices regarding modern or traditional techniques: ‘This is really challenging but it’s part of the designer’s job and key to successfully negotiating this is to take your target audience with you through the design process’ (2012). Shute however highlighted the negative association of vernacular buildings with poverty and Kinnear agreed, questioning whether the techniques have been over-romanticized by architects and the output ‘doesn’t necessarily help people feel that they are moving out of poverty’ (2012). The steel and brick metrocable and vertical gyms by Urban Think Tank also question this notion. However, having visited Caracas, it became obvious that the structural integrity of the architecture was the priority due to the heavy rains and unstable land. Therefore, attempting to use local materials, of which there are practically none, and unskilled labour would have been impractical.

Resourcefulness

When discussing the formation and vernacular of the barrios within Caracas, Brillembourg and Klumpner comment: ‘These houses, moreover, are examples of great creativity and ingenuity … The poor have, none the less, found the best solution to their needs in the barrios, where, over the past 80 years, 2.4 million dwellings have been constructed (cited in Brillembourg et al, 2005, p.223 - 253). Redfield-Peattie also noted the capacity and resourcefulness of communities enabling them to contribute and assist with access and labour (1985).

Aware of the resourcefulness and capability of the barrio communities, the work undertaken in Caracas recognized community needs through participatory tools and initiated several small-scale projects to address these issues. These gestures have demonstrated investment, progression and created a catalyst pilot scheme. It is hoped that the community may choose to expand or replicate aspects of the projects in the future.

Expansion

Co-ordinating with communities allows for gradual and sympathetic expansion, as and when communities need or want it. This is an idea which Brillembourg and Klumpner endorse; ‘Any workable plan must establish only a broad framework and structure within which development can take place according to the wishes and needs of the community it serves’ (cited in Brillembourg et al, 2005, p.252). The capacity for communities to contribute and become responsible for projects long term has been demonstrated in articles such as the Laos Clay School, the Eco-Resort in Mozambique and the Katrina Furniture Project. These projects have utilized local capacity and knowledge, whilst also contributing to the community through long-term income generation and education on new techniques, which can be applied in other work, such as housing repairs.

The inclusion of local residents in ORE’s 5th Street Slope garden construction sparked interest, encouraged involvement and reinforced ownership. This design has not only provided the low-income neighborhood with the physical facilities they require, but the process has created a social collective capable of contributing and making decisions regarding their local environment. Cuny (1985), Davis (1978) and all the interviewees greatly advocate the designing of a process, rather than the provision of a product. Implementing this is dependent on resources and financing, as well as community involvement and wider awareness of developmental issues.

Teach

Davis states multiple times that improving the education of communities with regard to building techniques is vital in ensuring reconstruction is done safely and can be adapted and maintained in the future (1978, p.64). This allows for replication, creating opportunities for expansion and possible income generation; ‘give a man a safe home and you have housed his family – but train him how to
'The physical object itself, the building, is only that part of the iceberg that is above water. The parts beneath – the livelihood opportunities, cultural values and aspirations – are the unseen, yet most important, aspects of successful housing.'
build his own safe house and you have housed his family, and very probably his children’s families, and his relatives and friends’ (Davis, 1978, p.36).

Through introducing a new construction technique using bamboo, Garcia Saxe has created a sustainable project which could be replicated in local communities. Crucially, the material is familiar to many local communities meaning that they already have the knowledge and necessary tools for working with bamboo. The Powerhouse project also alludes to adaptable expansion, investing in one house could ultimately result in the regeneration of the entire neighborhood. This concept is also a goal of Potrc and Esakov; ‘We are interested in low-cost sustainable solutions that can be developed step by step on a small scale, so that they can be constructed and disseminated throughout the community by the residents themselves. Such solutions empower individuals and offer new models for institutional approaches to planning’ (cited in Brillembourg et al, 2005, p.183).

Organizations such as Citizen Architects and DWF, have created programmes to assist beyond physical assets. Their events and communication packages offer advice and education for communities to help combat vulnerabilities and increase resilience in the long term.

4. Root Causes
The benefits of involving communities throughout projects, both in research and construction, expand beyond that of physical assets. To prevent an ongoing cycle of vulnerability in communities, the bigger issues surrounding poverty must be addressed; ‘The physical object itself, the building, is only that part of the iceberg that is above water. The parts beneath – the livelihood opportunities, cultural values and aspirations – are the unseen, yet most important, aspects of successful housing.’ (Sanderson & Sharma, 2001, p.184).

Present during all ‘Interviews’ and explored within ‘Key Issues’ is the lack of awareness and presence of designers and professionals within this field, which may ultimately be a factor limiting the number of design projects undertaken in developing areas. The re-education of designers as to the potential of developmental work is required to counteract this. A common misconception is to place importance on physical building only; ‘Sometimes an architect can make a difference in a community without building’ (Architecture for Humanity, 2006, p.310). Kinnear believes this work is still a niche area, stating ‘We are still all on the fringe really in terms of professionals working in this field’ (Kinnear, 2012). This must change to encourage more projects to be initiated.

It is crucial to note that low standards of housing are often not so much to do with design, but other factors such as economic opportunities and ownership. As Twigg states, ‘It is unrealistic to expect poor people to invest in more secure housing when they live in constant fear of eviction, which is a particular problem in many urban slums’ (n.d).

The research in Caracas revealed that the steep hillside slums have structurally inadequate high density housing built on unstable land, leaving them vulnerable to heavy rains and subsequent erosion. As Citizen Architects have done in Latur, running workshops to encourage and facilitate safer building practice would address the standard of housing. However, the root causes of high density housing and increasing vulnerability to disasters also need addressing. Chavez, president of Venezuela began giving land deeds to barrio residents who had lived in their home for a particular number of years (cited in Brillembourg et al, 2005, p.254-5). This gesture hoped to provide stability through ownership and investment, however, in reality it provided a superficial and shortsighted solution, with ‘the potential to fragment the barrio community, supplanting ‘ours’ with ‘mine’ (Brillembourg and Klumpner cited in Brillembourg et al, 2005, p.255). As discussed, violence within the barrios is a concern for many residents, with the police reluctant to intervene through fear. Therefore, the issue has progressed from one of design, where projects such as streetlighting and rearrangement of stairways and alleyways could make a positive impact, to one of root causes where governance and a sense of authority has been lost and needs to be reinstated.

The provision of the improved clay stove design also touches on safety by significantly reducing the vulnerability of women to threats whilst collecting firewood. It is unlikely, however, that this problem can be eliminated through the clay stove alone. The real reason they are subject to such an environment must be resolved by questioning governing bodies in order to find long term solutions that deal with prevention rather than reducing the impact of the cause.

Mohammed Rezwan, has made great efforts in publicizing and providing a simple solution to the increasing spatial threat of climate change in Bangladesh, through Community Boats. Whilst the project is highly commendable in terms of finding an appropriate response to a current concern, consideration must be given to dealing with the cause. Therefore,
designers should ask why there is such a rapidly increasing water level and how that issue may be addressed through design.

Within an increasingly deprived area, Design 99 have demonstrated alternative and affordable modifications, whilst providing basic community services to resurrect and repopulate the neighborhood. The recent economic recession had such a rapid and detrimental impact in Detroit, that questions must be raised as to how to prevent the community from vulnerability to such financial instability and livelihood preservation. Through the affordability and self-sustaining nature of the Powerhouse it is clear that Design 99 are considering these issues. However, it may be unrealistic to expect that they can all be addressed on a primary level without external stakeholders getting involved.

Rogue has no doubt that design can make a significant contribution to developing environments. However, to ensure the sustainability of a project, it is important to recognize when it can only address the effect rather than the cause. In these cases a higher-level intervention is required, but there is nothing to indicate that this cannot be resolved through thoughtful design projects. This is where the issue may be less of designers needing to get involved with developmental work, and more of external stakeholders recognizing their invaluable contribution by considering design a fundamental necessity.

**Recommendations:**

Following this discussion, six recommendations have been formed from the findings:

1. Increased recognition for the value of designers within developing communities.

2. Designers must adapt to a changing role:
   - Allowing for gradual expansion of catalyst designs or prototypes to meet the needs and desires of individual communities.
   - Advocating for a link between emergency post-disaster response and long term developmental reconstruction.
   - Becoming more of a facilitator or enabler working alongside the community rather than sole contributor.

3. Appropriate appreciation and acknowledgment for the resourcefulness of communities’ abilities:
   - Undertake community consultations to identify priorities, concerns and enable culturally and climatically suitable designs.
   - Where appropriate local materials or vernacular design should be utilized.
   - Involve communities to assist where possible with access and labour, whilst teaching new techniques and principles of safe building.

4. Increased consideration and efforts to address root causes through design.

5. Widespread understanding that developmental work can create and inspire innovative new designs.

6. **GO ROGUE!**
to find out more about any of the articles featured in this issue or to dis-
cover new projects and upcoming features visit rogue at:

www.roguearchitecture.co.uk