

arcVision Prize
Women and Architecture 2015
Honorable Mention

“ *Most of the time, architects think that what they've learned makes them an expert, that they always know better, that they know where and how people should live, in what or where they should be, or what is the good environment. I think this is wrong because the architect will not always be there. I mean, after you design, you leave. I have the sense that for so many projects, after they are built, the owner has to knock down or add something, change this, or change that. This is a waste of money, and it's not very healthy working this way, especially when you work with the poor. They don't have money to fix the architect's mistakes. So it's better to think and work in another way. The architectural knowledge and skills I learned are important, but they never taught me that the design process should be done by an architect in partnership with, and as a servant of, the owner of the place. Yet this saves cost and also makes the building more efficient. When you work with the poor you are not allowed to spend a lot, and when the poor have to spend their own money, it's even more important because you cannot afford to make mistakes.* ”



PATAMA ROONRAKWIT – Thailand

TEMPORARY SHELTER AND NEW HOUSING PROJECTS FOR TSUNAMI EFFECTED 2004

PROJECT DATA

Location

Pang-nga, Thailand

Project Type

Temporary shelter

Use of the Building

Temporary house

Construction Period

2005

Very soon after the tsunami devastated the area of the western coast of Thailand in 2004, the CASE team assisted tsunami victims to build temporary housing on land donated by a local Buddhist temple and funded by CARE International.

Thirty-two housing units were designed and built in clusters, taking care not to cut down any trees on the site.

The houses were simple, adjustable and could be replicated by the local people. The design was based on a 1.2 x 2.4 m. module derived from the dimension of materials available in the local market, resulting in a typical 2.4 x 2.4 m. unit, which was adjusted to build houses of different forms such as square or L-shaped, according to the site conditions. Materials used included plywood, cement board, fiber-cement roofing and locally available pre-cast RC post.

This shelter therefore became the information center itself. When the people move back they can build their permanent houses using the same concept they learned during their stay in this temporary house.

All the buildings were raised above the ground to avoid floods and future tsunamis.

Even though the housing was supposed to be temporary, residents lived in them for many years after the tsunami, as the houses were well-built and durable.



PATAMA RONRAKWIT



PATAMA ROONRAKWIT

TEN HOUSE BANGKOK

PROJECT DATA

Location

Bangkok, Thailand

Project Type

A pilot project of alternative house design for the middle class of Bangkok

Use of the Building

Housing

Construction Period

2006 – 2008

TEN Bangkok originated from the current housing problems in Bangkok. With the total provision of upper class housing by the private sector and the governmental aids, to that of the lower class, Bangkok's broad spectrum of middle classes are left with the absence of alternate housing visions. While the overpriced housings are out of reach, the people of medium income are also ineligible for governmental housing aids. They are forced to enter the dead end route of Bangkok housing, with neither opportunity nor alternative.

The work starts with the concept of community. What would happen if each of these powerless individuals began to build up their strength through cooperation and collaboration with others? As a collective force, will they stand a chance against the brutal economic competition in the housing world? As an individual, each of them remains powerless, but as a community, both their economic and creative power may multiply.

TEN Bangkok gradually became a collaborative project which requires working efforts from everyone involved. In terms of the physical collaboration, the project would occupy a single plot of land, divided into ten subplots. The footprint of each subplot is equal. Each inhabitant would then act as the designer of their own home, in collaboration with their neighbors.

TEN does not result from the design of a single creative genius. It is a housing project in which each and every unit must be born along with others; each and every design cannot be done individually. Although the actual design began after the dwelling criteria were established, each inhabitant began to dwell within the project even before the actual design started. As they work together to frame the design, the community is formed and the cooperative dwelling has begun. Architecture in this case is not that of the architects' determination and control. Rather, architecture is the fruit of cooperative design, in which the architects are also the clients; the clients are also the architects. Each design is a result of laborious negotiation with others. Therefore each and every design has to be shaped and reshaped collectively. As the design is transformed, the dwelling requirements of each inhabitant are also reconstructed. The result is a unique collective project whose sense of totality is marked by the diversity of each individual design. Cooperative design may work if it also allows individual identity to emerge.



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