

Farooh,

Hi.

Many thanks for your help + favour. We have drafted a general text which is 3500 words (300 requested!) but we can keep it on 1 page. Would you be able to comment/annotate by return. Our aim is, I think, to show the common thread of our underlying theme, rather than list everything. It is very difficult to do! Points to bear in mind. (1) Nordberg already has a list of material + views. (2) This short text is aimed to be put under the aegis of a busy committee. (3) We will also send detailed project lists and copies of selected articles. So we are trying to get 1 page we can fax late today to Nairobi. Sorry to push you but we are still trying to fit in a day or two of holidays late this week, so I hope its not too much to ask if you can come back to us late today! Take care. I find it almost impossible! Claire has tried

→ I'll have + good luck

Development Workshop was founded in 1973 with the aim of understanding and developing local capacities to resolve human settlement problems in developing countries.

The group's early research and field work in Egypt, Oman and Iran - Development Workshop was based in Tehran from 1975 to 1979 - led it to pioneer the role of the rural builder as an agent of development (Selseleh Integrated Development Project, Luristan, Iran, 1975-77.) A seminal exhibition, "Indigenous Building and the Third World", (Tehran, Iran, 1976; UN Habitat Conference, Vancouver, Canada, 1976), expressed the group's underlying concern with respecting existing socio-cultural structures and understanding indigenous practices as an essential starting-point for improving living conditions in developing countries.

This underlying concern today remains at the core of Development Workshop's comprehensive approach to human settlements development, which embraces policy formulation, project design and implementation, research, institutional development, training and teaching. It is difficult to adequately reflect in a short summary the wide range of projects managed over the past 20 years by the group's three founding Directors, Farokh Afshar, Allan Cain, and John Norton, now working from offices in Canada, Angola and France respectively, but the following may illustrate not only this range, but also the common underlying concerns.

In India and Pakistan, the group has developed rural habitat programmes (assistance to Aga Khan Housing Boards, 1987-1990) and highlighted the need to focus on local resources in long-term strategic planning for the area (assistance to Aga Khan Foundation, 1991). Development Workshop also provided assistance in formulating a national shelter policy for Pakistan (World Bank, 1987-88) and has worked on a range of urban development projects in India and Pakistan, including upgrading and historical city conservation, (Kerala Urban Development Project, India, 1986-88). Research in Oman (1974), Iran (1976 - 79) and Pakistan (funded by Aga Khan Foundation, 1982-84) demonstrated that traditional technologies and industries are more efficient, equitable and ecologically sound than more modern alternatives, despite social and institutional pressures to promote the latter. A simple, but highly effective computer model was developed to facilitate such comparisons.

Development Workshop's current Sambizanga Squatter Area Upgrading Project is the first initiative of this kind in Angola. At present it covers an urban district (*comuna*) of about 95,000 persons in one of Luanda's peri-urban *musseques* (informal settlements). Project actions are prioritized by the community and implemented through an active process of participation. Since 1987, Development Workshop has also been developing community-based water, sanitation and health programmes in Luanda's *musseques*. Over 100 *activistas* (community development workers) and apprentice technologists were trained during 1992 in Development Workshop's training centre in Luanda. Development Workshop's uninterrupted presence in Luanda (including during the current civil war) since 1980 has enabled it to work closely with the government on institutional building in various areas relating to urban upgrading.

In Vietnam, training for typhoon-resistant building has focussed on the greater potential and accessibility of existing "traditional" construction methods over "modern" buildings and used innovative methods of communicating these to the population (e.g. traditional puppet theatre). This UNCHS/UNDP programme (in consortium with Gret, 1989-91) put into place a successful model for local and regional planning and training.

Development Workshop's award winning Woodless Construction Programme in the rural and peri-urban areas of the Sahel has been training local masons since 1980 in vault and dome roofing techniques to overcome the disappearance of adequate and affordable timber and these techniques are now readily used by local people. The present phase of the Programme (with IUCN, funded by DANIDA, 1993-1997) now develops local teams of mason trainers, and strengthens the capacity of the Programme to be sensitive to local needs and to respond to diverse local preferences and resources as the geographical scope of the Programme widens.