HABITAT PROJECT “BAN CHUINKLAL”
ARQUITECTURA SIN FRONTERAS ESPAÑA

BAN CHUINKLAL PROJECT

Ban Chuinklal project is an intervention to improve household habitat conditions, developed by Arquitectura Sin Fronteras España and Guatemalan association ASIAPRODI (Indigenous agricultural association for integral development) in 16 communities in vulnerable conditions in Retalhuleu, on the south coast of Guatemala.

Related to physical improvement of housing for the 250 most vulnerable families in these communities, a complex social production strategy is established, aiming to generate human development in the short, medium and long term. To that end, an intervention is planned and carried out together with the local population, with the following components:

- Formal training for local bricklayers and master builders is facilitated with the aim of qualifying human resources in the communities. Subsequently these builders were hired during the project’s implementation phase.

- Participation of local authorities in decision-making and as a project’s social audit.

- Strengthening local authorities for Right to habitat, Housing Act in Guatemala and processes of habitat’s social production.

- Planning and project management by a local community organization (ASIAPRODI) with the aim of establishing technical and financial management capabilities in the population and enabling people to cope with their habitat problems independently.
Access to dignified housing is the primary objective of the Project, around which the rest of intervention’s components are structured and developed. Depending on the families’ circumstances, different types of interventions were implemented: home improvement, minimum housing or growing housing. This fact allowed to make a better use of available economic resources and to facilitate housing access for a greater number of population.

1- IMPROVEMENT OF MINIMUM ROOFING
The intervention leverages existing roof structure built by international cooperation as emergency solution after Hurricane Stan in 2005. With this project this existing structure is completed and expanded to become a formal housing.

2- IMPROVEMENT OF HOUSING IN “EL TRIUNFO”
In the community of El Triunfo, international cooperation had built a housing for the displaced population arrived after the armed conflict, from the highlands. Over time, these homes built with prefabricated panels and tin roofs suffered a sharp deterioration until falling into ruins.

With the intervention damaged plates were replaced and the roof was rebuilt with MOR brick, allowing full rehabilitation of housing.

3- TYPE 01 GROWING HOUSING MODEL
For new homes a growing housing strategy was developed, offering from the outset a proper space for life but, at the same time and with a small investment, allowing families to expand their house beyond the project’s duration. The type 01 growing house model has two spaces able be closed and completed to turn them into new rooms of the house.

4- GROWING HOUSING MODEL
In this model the same strategy of type 01 house with a slight modification is used; the finished project area was bigger, leaving only one space to be closed subsequently.

5- MINIMUM HOUSE
Due to the huge housing deficit in the communities and the budget shortage for the project, this model of minimum housing was developed so that a greater number of people could access, at least, to a safe, secure and safe space. The challenge of this model was to provide the greatest possible surface at a lower cost.

To this end, an exercise of modulation was made in the design in order to leverage all construction elements taking into account factory’s measures and, therefore, generating “zero waste”.

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Point 1 of Hasselt Charter: Cooperate for fair and sustainable development initiatives in active collaboration with disadvantaged population or communities. This process shall follow principles of human solidarity, non-discrimination and will be aimed at promoting their self-sufficiency.

The project aims to solve society real and specific problems in housing. However, around this action a series of activities are promoted with the objective of strengthening communities at different levels (technical, financial and managerial) as well as to enable population to cope with their habitat problems independently.

(1) A community cooperative dedicated to building materials manufacture is promoted and supported. This productive activity aims at, as stated in its rules:
Providing community access to quality materials,
Becoming a source of employment for community population and
Developing social projects with generated profits.

(2) Access to formal training for local bricklayers and master builders is facilitated; which means an improvement on technical and economic capacities of human resources in these communities.

(3) Moreover, a specialised training is provided on:
Right to Habitat, Housing Law and Social production of habitat. This training gives local authorities the chance to know their rights, as well as mechanisms allowed by law for grant management and social production strategies to cope with the housing and habitat deficit.
Point 6 of Hassell Charter: Share knowledge, promote discussion, reflection and awareness, and collaborate in the advancement of the ‘social production of habitat’.

Ban Chuinkal program is carried out through a process of social production, in which different local actors are involved in different processes of the Project:

1- Participation and empowerment of local structures. The partner in the project, ASIAPRODI, is a local indigenous association. Through them, needs and demands from the population are known. Moreover, ASIAPRODI, with the support of ASF, is responsible for the management of funds and project implementation.

2- Participation and empowerment of local authorities. Local authorities, through the Southern Community Authorities Board participate in decision making, project design, evaluation, selection of most vulnerable families, and, during implementation, making the social audit of the project.

3- Families involvement. Families receiving housing become an active part of their own development by participating in the process of manufacturing materials, working as unskilled labor and contributing with a part of the construction materials.

4- Establishment of a manufacturing materials cooperative. With the Project, a cooperative that will serve for the manufacture of the materials used in the construction of housing is promoted.

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