1. Design and Users

Chamanga is a small fishing town located in a coastal province of Ecuador. On April 16, 2016 a 7.8 magnitude earthquake destroyed approximately 80% of the town’s buildings.

Opción Más

Opción Más is a local organization that since 2009 is committed to using dance, music, theater and other forms of cultural expression as a means to provide opportunities and positive alternatives for at-risk youth, while strengthening Chamanga’s cultural identity.
2. Community workshops and local knowledge

Both phases of construction were supported by a process of collaboration. This aimed to respect the right of chamanguaftos to self-determine the places they inhabit, and to improve the project through local knowledge. Participation went from broad visioning to specific citizen-evaluation of technical solutions.

Participation goals

- Users know better about their needs and context than outsiders - design is improved and more exact.
- People have the power to shape their environment - decisions are not external or imposed.
- Users decide about their environment, they have the power to shape, modify and maintain - the building/space belongs to them.

Phasing Strategy

Opción Más members and the broader community of Chamanga were involved in the decision-making process through a series of workshops, charrettes and meetings led by Atarraya on site. The chosen strategy would accommodate a first phase design by PSU students on the east side of the lot, allowing the second design phase designed by students of the HM to have more flexibility in case the lot behind the one on OM had already bought would be possible to acquire.
3. Minga, materials and environmental concerns

of earthquake-resistance, community acceptance and

Dry Toilet System

build with off-the-shelf parts that can be bought on the

Centro Cultural Chamanga | San José de Chamanga

Phase 1

Phase 2

Portland State

atarraya

2016

2017

2018

4. Part of a larger post-disaster recovery effort

A long-term collaboration that started after the earthquake, involving the cooperation of UIC, Portland State, and atarraya, is working on academic design/build projects. This includes the construction of temporary buildings in underprivileged contexts, differentiating themselves with local materials and techniques. The collaboration is focusing on sustainable and replicable solutions, allowing for the scalability of the projects. The collaboration is also aiming to address the cultural and social challenges faced by the communities, fostering a sense of ownership among the residents.

Accompanying the physical intervention, the collaboration is also engaging in community-led initiatives, such as workshops and training sessions. This approach is geared towards empowering the community to take charge of their own development and to ensure the long-term sustainability of the projects.