The one day ASF-UK workshop, facilitated by ASF-UK Associates, focuses on identifying and representing complex issues of development and humanitarian practice. The workshop is aimed at architecture students and has taken place in a variety of Architecture Schools across the UK since 2008.

The workshop begins with the individual task of identifying and recording ‘vulnerability’ from given images, followed by a number of participatory exercises to reflect on these vulnerabilities. ASF-UK Associates then present a variety of work (student and professional) in order to explain complex issues through representation. Students then continue with both group and individual exercises looking at causes and effects of chosen vulnerabilities and representations of these issues. Crits are then held at the end of the workshop to allow students to explain their individual pieces which form part of the ‘Drawing for Development’ digital magazine available on the ASF-UK website.

The workshop is focused on being a comprehensive day of creative learning including introductions to vulnerability, current design work in development, group analysis, individual reflection, critiques and the creation of a digital magazine.

The workshop aims to encourage participants to identify, address and represent complex issues of development. The workshop teaches this process to students working on humanitarian and development projects to allow them to form a clear and defined basis for the designs they will produce to address the issues they are dealing with. The workshop is designed as a tool to be used at any time in the academic year to get participants to begin thinking about and understanding ways of addressing underlying issues that their potential solutions and designs will seek to alleviate. It is hoped participants will learn to not just look at problems, but also at root causes and communicate these visually in a clear manner understandable to others. ASF-UK feel if students can understand and represent these complex issues, they can in turn create more meaningful and sustainable solutions to address them.

The workshop has been developed and adapted after each session and it is our intention to continue to roll it out to other UK universities interested in humanitarian and development practice in 2010.