Ghana is experiencing a housing crisis as outlined in the recent UN-Habitat housing profile. Like many rapidly developing countries, people in Ghana are increasingly turning their back on local construction, in favor of western principles perceived as the vision for a modern globalised society. Current building practice is moving towards an increasingly standardised format using expensive and imported materials often with a lack of appropriate construction skills. These trends pose social, economic and environmental challenges towards the development of the built environment. The workshop delved into the causes and effects of this and reflected on the ways in which needs could be met in sustainable and locally relevant ways creating livelihoods and better environments. A range of alternative forms of practice based around a synthesis of local and global solutions were developed around these issues.

In response to an intensive programme of exploration, a series of proposals were put forward, expressed through documentation, posters and built prototypes. The complex nature of the topic and the short time scale in which it was addressed created a vigorous and energetic learning experience for participants in which a lot was addressed in a short space of time. This led to a number of informed and important questions arising which were able to influence the work of our partner organisations, and that we hope will play an important part in their future work. As part of the programme a one day Symposium was held in Accra which provided an opportunity to bring together a number of important organisations working in this field, and raise the profile of the subject in the region.

As well as a learning experience intended to influence the future work of the participants, the workshop was intended to act as a catalyst for the longer term initiatives of our partner organizations. As well as the direct contribution towards VPWA's Green Ghana initiative, perhaps one of the best opportunities for this came through the one-day Symposium in which a number of new relationships were made between significant development organisations in Ghana, and it is hoped that this will be a catalyst for future initiatives. Out of this we hope that some form of network can be built to act as a platform from which to develop the positive momentum.