

KHARTOUM, SUDAN 2011

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

In Sudan there is a large economic divide between social classes, not helped by a complex political background. While there are many built environment professionals dedicated to improving conditions for poorer communities there is little opportunity to do so in a participatory manner. Further to a presentation given by ASF-UK at Reading University, ASF-UK were asked by the University of Reading and the University of Khartoum to conduct a three day workshop, in order to expose Sudanese built environment professionals to some tools and methodologies of participatory design. The workshop was part of the joint Developing Partnerships in Higher Education (DeLPHE) project between the two institutions funded by the Department of International Development and British Council. Held at the University of Khartoum in December 2011 the three-day workshop gave local built environment professionals the opportunity to learn about, experiment with, critically analyse and design their own tools of participatory engagement. The main objective was to encourage participants to rethink their role as a built environment professional, moving away from the role of the 'provider' towards the position of an 'enabler' through a series of participatory practical exercises and experiments.

GOAL ACHIEVED

Approximately forty participants attended from areas of up to two hundred miles from Khartoum. Participants varied from architects (recent graduates to experienced professionals) to engineers, planners and academics. Participants were very enthusiastic and engaged each day. Outputs were produced to a very high level, from role-plays to formal presentations, even under very tight time constraints. Participant's energy and engagement was overwhelming, highlighting their interest in the subject of participatory appraisal and design. Participants expectations included learning how to use tools of engagement, how to engage with local communities and how to ensure experience/engagement for all. On the whole, from feedback given, participants felt their expectations had been met.



Date: December 2011
Location: Khartoum Sudan
ASF Team: N. Shinkins
Partners: University of Reading, University of Khartoum
Donors: DFID & British Council (under the DeLPHE project)
Project type: International Workshop

METHODOLOGY OF WORK



The workshop was participatory in nature and followed a process of learning, experimenting, analysing and designing. Participants worked mainly in groups and with presentations and feedback at the end of each day learning was enhanced through group debate and discussion. Day one was an introduction to participation where the theory and value of participation through case studies and practical exercises were explained. The objective was to provide an understanding of participation; it's background and the work of ASF-UK. Day two focused on engaging with participation. Participants experimented with tools of participatory rapid appraisal (PRA), understanding how they are applied and what their strengths and weaknesses are. The objective was to expose participants to PRA through learning in action, which was followed by critical analysis of the tools. Day three focused on designing tools of participatory engagement where participants designed tools of engagement to further develop understanding of participation and how it can be used. The objective was to promote creative thinking and further develop participants' thoughts and analysis of participatory tools through designing them for specific user groups.



FUTURE PERSPECTIVE

After a successful three days strong networks have been created between ASF and both universities. ASF-UK has been invited to give further talks in the University of Reading and there is a potential for future collaboration in Sudan.