

INDIA WORKSHOP 2010

Date: July 2010
Location: Almora, Uttarakhand, India
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Partners: SEEDS India & Lok Chetna Manch
Donors: The Walter Guinness Trust, course fees & time donated by ASF team
Project type: International workshop

PROBLEM ADDRESSED



India loses 1% of its housing stock, approximately 2 million homes, each year as a result of natural disasters. In a context of recurrent disasters, the workshop addressed the challenge of how to build back better in order to reduce vulnerability and build resilience for future disasters. The workshop explored a range of small innovations in green technology from bamboo prototypes for earthquake resistant building to compressed stabilised earth blocks in the context of the Indian Himalayas.

GOAL ACHIEVED

Following on from an intensive study and critique of practices we set about proposing, inventing and testing ideas for safer, more sustainable methods which was expressed through documentation, posters and built prototypes. We covered a wide range of issues, at times overwhelming, but it enabled the group to learn a lot in a short space of time, and start to ask informed and critical questions. One of the key outputs was a harvest map – a physical map of skills, resources on a local and regional level.



METHODOLOGY OF WORK



The workshop was structured with the first week for research and analysis using participatory tools to understand the context and vulnerability (by looking at the traditional and contemporary vernacular architecture, available skills, materials employed) and the second week for developing propositions for a safer and more sustainable architecture in the area (considering the role of green technology and options to reduce risk and vulnerability). The culmination of the workshop was a small covered shelter drawing on and testing the research into bamboo and earth construction, and shelter design.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVE

From the start this workshop has been seen as a catalyst for a more long-term project to develop a series of guidelines and a prototype for safe and sustainable construction in the region. We aim to continue to work with Lok Chetna Manch and SEEDS India to develop a series of guidelines which will form a good practice guide for safe and sustainable construction in the region. This will then be the starting point for a programme of mason training workshops and consultation to develop a prototype for shelter construction.

