

The Rural Housing Studio Evaluation

6 responses

Personal info

Name

6 responses

Damian Didier Barassa van der Velden

Pelle Rademakers

Corne Nuijten

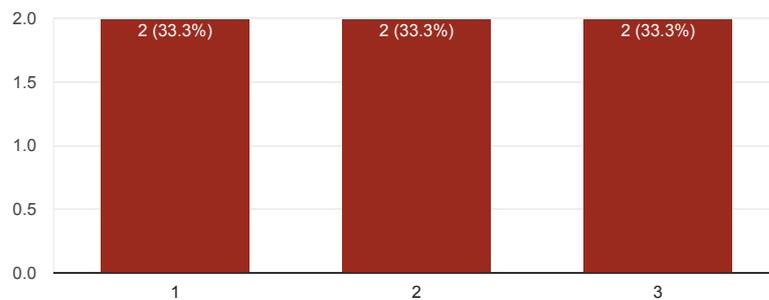
Argjire Krasniqi

Gathanga Jackson Kariuki

Maud van Dijck

Team Number

6 responses



Why did you join the rural housing studio?

6 responses

I was intrigued by the presentation about the project.

I really wanted to go abroad. then i looked at the different possibilities and building for a poor family in a sustainable way looked really cool. i like to help people and i also thought that i could learn allot from this experience. Working with different cultures in always really cool. it's also nice that your project is bigger than just one house because the whole community can learn from it.

The aim of the content of the support tool is something which I'm personally very interested in. I really believe in this way of providing development to the needy. I'm a traveler, an architect and an engineer. The adventure and purpose of the Rural housing studio fits my personal interests and capabilities.

There are many reasons that made me join RHS. First, based on my experience till that time, leading and NGO which all the focus is in volunteering bases and working on sustainable project to and for the community, I was already convinced what the impact of a person/architect might have to the family in need. Rural Housing Studio sounded quite similar but volunteering in another continent was much more challenging and exciting at the same time. Second, I knew the organiser before, Michiel, and already believed in his work and idea. Third, I love traveling and knowing new cultures and new people, so being able to help them and at the same time enjoy visiting Africa seemed very unique opportunity.

To be part of the investigations into capacity building and alternative building solutions in my country. to take part in something different.

Kenya stole my heart 3 years ago, last year our teacher Michiel Smits opened up a internship spot in Kenya, I was directly interested. Not only because it was in Kenya, also because you get the opportunity to get a wider perspective on cultural exposure and the chance to do something back for humanity.

What do you think about the rural housing studio?

6 responses

So far it is great, the setting is just informal enough.

i really like the idea. And i also still believe this still could work. Solving the housing problem in this way is really nice.

Taking part in the Rural housing studio questions the contemporary situation in and around Chepchoina a lot, and does research towards answers on the current poor way of living that this area deals with and with problems that occur during the research. The fact that research and the actual practice are so related in order to solve cultural and constructional local problems reveals not only problems but also provides solutions. Thinking together with locals about these solutions and sharing knowledge to develop their way of living is constructive in itself.

I think it is quite early to talk about the studio since it is in its first steps now. In the other hand the methodology that the studio use I consider it new, and it might have an impact of changing peoples lifes.

A good opportunity to investigate alternative building methods.

I think it is a good thing, that we don't only make sure people will develop in a better environment. We also give them the opportunity to reproduce it while we are not around. There should be more organisations like this, not only improving the lifestyle with money from western countries, but improve the lifestyle with less money and the chance to teach a community.

What did you learn during the rural housing studio?

6 responses

Way too many things, everything from architecture to antropology, having this experience developed me as a person. The experience I had here must be one of a kind, and I dare to say that this might define who I am.

at first it was really hard to get exact things that you learned. but after some thinking i learned allot.

1. being away from home for so long already changes you and you could learn from this.
2. managing data, with all the research it was nice to learn to cope with that.
3. finding a new designing methodology, learning how to gather data and use this for your project was nice to do.
4. the whole designing process, learning how to design a dwelling with scarce resources really requires you to rethink every possibility.
5. building your own design also is also something new. it lets you look at different angles and mistakes you made during the design phase.
- 6 communication and working together, working with the whole team made you also better at team work and your communication skills.
7. managing your building and time, planning and working under pressure also makes you a better student.

i probably learned allot more but this are the main points.

As a studio, for which I'm mostly speaking on behalf of the students, is a perfect way to learn much about yourself and the world you live in. It's a great environment for students to explore themselves and learn many things about culture, architecture, engineering, anthropology and practicing science in the field. This does not only count for the students but for every participant in this project.

The whole experience i general was a lesson. Starting form living together with different people from different countries, it didnt seem that easy in the beginning, like being surrounded by people all the time,

and realizing that there will be no time that you can enjoy some time alone. After some time I could see myself being comfortable in such a environment and some time passed and I didnt feel the need of being alone anymore, which was surprising for me too.

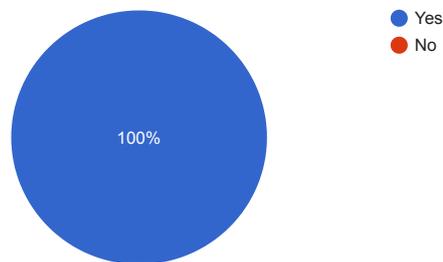
While during the work in the field, I realized how important is to share knowledge, teach people and sometimes learn together and being challenged in many ways. I got convinced even more on how important is to give people hope and the be able to change their life.

That trying something new in the built environment is a good learning experience.

During the rural housing studio I focused on several competences. Moreover I wanted to prepare myself for my upcoming specialisation, minor and graduation thesis. First it is good for my overall knowledge to be a part of the whole building phase and not only the preparing fase or realisation fase. Second the internship gave me more information about the basics and practice. On Avans University of Applied Science they offer you practice sessions, only one practice session doesn't teach you the in and outs of by example concrete. Here I got the opportunity to learn it step by step, especially the steps: calculating, rations, mixing and pouring. Third it was quite a rollercoaster, so I got the chance to grow as a person. Fourth it is a pretty big communication assignment, just being with two people in one team, in our case with two totally different karakters.

Did you personally develop during the rural housing studio project?

6 responses



How did you personally develop during the rural housing studio project?

6 responses

Short answer would be: matured. In what way exactly I don't know yet, I will most likely find out when I will come back home when I come back to my friends and family. Being with friends and family might let me see how I have changed, but mostly other people telling me how I might have changed.

i think that i changed as a person. because you worked in such a different context you have to adapt every day. this and working with different problems and cultures makes you more versatile.

You reflect your own identity constantly to your surrounding. The cultural differences between me and the individuals in my surrounding in the last 4,5 months are drastically and fundamentally different. I'm have constantly been reflecting myself on the other in every phase of the project. Coming so close, or even penetrate a family in Africa with interviews, observations and workshops forces you into a modest researcher. You are retrieving data out of a families life! Further along the project you roll into your position as professional adviser, in order to eventually build together a house the family and locals. We both have taken many sort of positions towards this family in different professions. Anthropologists, researchers, accountants, engineers, architectural advisers, constructionworkers till social workers. That makes this constant reflection rich.

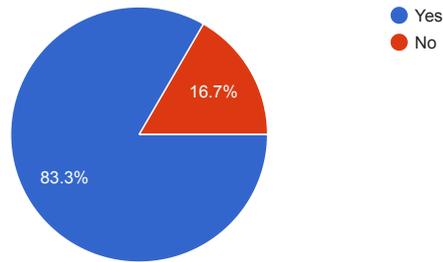
Living with a lot of people in one space it seemed quite challenging. This made me be more open to new situations and more talkative.

learnt to take charge of situations. gained confidence in experimenting in new ideas.

Before I flew in, I informed the rural housing studio about my unstable mental condition. For me it was a heavy 3,5 months with a lot of tears, insecurities and homesickness. However every time my mind was going 10 places at once I managed to keep focus, sometimes within a hour, other times it took me a few days. However when the studio asked us to fill in this self knowledge test about our karakter I really got to know myself and I finally was able to fill in al the holes, insecurities and tears into meaningful answers. I can say that this internship has gotten me a big step further into becoming secure and independent woman Maud.

Did you manage to achieve the goals that you had set for yourself within the rural housing studio?

6 responses



If you did/didn't, please explain why

6 responses

I think I achieved my goals, but my expectations are a different story. I have learned and developed a lot, but the experience was way different than expected in more ways than one.

i wanted to learn more about the design process, data management and ways of using data and collecting it. with all the things we've done here i think i managed to progress these skills to a higher level. Also solving problem and thinking to look out of the box really progressed. Because your in such a different context and everything keeps on changing.

Many goals I have answered. Many goals which I didn't set for myself were answered. But in the end I had hoped to go with the family through a complete building process. We were unable to finish the project until the end. This leaves a lot of knowledge, within the buildingprocess, unshared.

The goals I wanted to achieve were to build with sustainable and natural materials, to build the house in the cheapest way so everybody in the community will be able to afford it, to bring smart ideas to the community and teach them how to, making a good piece of architecture where the family will be proud of and the community will start to believe that they can be the change they want to see. I think we achieved all these goals by building the house with minimum budget, using and reusing all the existing resources.

I feel that i achieved some of my goals. new experiences

Learning new research methods, coding, improving my English, becoming more independent, get to know about more management. I can say I have grown in al these competences. One by one they came along during the project and gave me the opportunity to look into it, learn, practice and grow.

What do you think of the context (social/cultural/built environment) in which the rural housing studio is taking place?

6 responses

It seems that the people here have developed just too much to be helped in the way this edition of the rural housing studio desires. We have met a lot of cultural and social speedbumps along the way.

the social/ cultural and build environment is so different than the environment where used to in the netherlands. Some things are in the beginning really weird and you definitely have a culture shock. for instance the status of man and woman in a family or community. also they way they build here is just so undeveloped and different this is all something to get used to in the beginning.

The context in which we did research and built the house turned out to be very complex. Noticable about the area is that many things happened in the recent past. The poor situation of local families is due to a kapitalist wave going over the area. People have jobs for big families to support. There was so much a community spirit area as the support sketched in my mind before I came here. People are already rather individual. They all know each other but it does not work as a family. You could compare it with the culture in a dutch village, only the people deal with enormous poverty. This makes the cultural and social environment very complex. So complex that it was hard for many teams to stay on the track of the support tool.

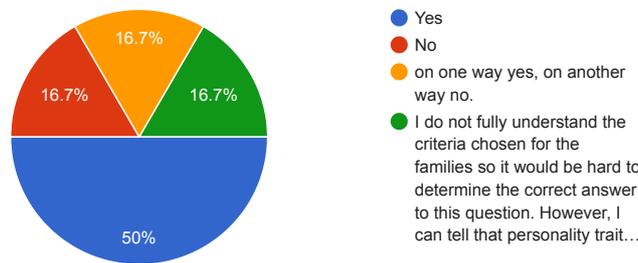
I think it is a place to be, the environment is very special and I am sure it will gain some space in each persons heart that worked there. It has many challenging and I do admit that it is very different from all the things I was used to see and experience but that made the whole experience even more special.

a bit more modern than was portrayed in the support tool. Capitalism is quite awake and therefore the community is chasing after the same lifestyle as people in more developed communities. Culturally, the community values are still alive and deeply practiced although with a lot of modifications to fit the modern context. The built environment, especially housing has a long way to go. people still trying to build beyond their means, and for those who can't are satisfied with their situation.

Before I flew in, I already made my mind, it is going to be a cultural shock. This was definitely true. First of all you see all the house build out of mud and wood and the bad health conditions. Second you see children being happy with the little things they have and when you are talking to their parents you get to understand the problems they are dealing with. All the people are very social and really nice, however for me it is the question: "Are the people nice because you are a wealthy person or are they really interested?". Third you see a lot of people addicted to alcohol or drugs what makes you think if there are no other solutions for the problems they are dealing with. However behind (mostly) the father, there is a lovely wife with nice children. So the conclusion is that the people in Sokomjinga and Chepchoina can find joy in the little things without worrying in front of our eyes. However you can see and feel their worries about having enough money, enough food, a good school for the children and a nice house to stay in.

Do you believe the rural housing studio is targeting the right families?

6 responses



If we did/didn't please explain why

6 responses

Having people with different levels of capacities will be able to result in different staple building methods for different levels of capacities.

on one way where helping poor families in the community with a better house and everybody in the community could benefit from that. So i think it's really good to work in this village.

on the other side because the family has to pay for everything themselves the poorest of the community (the ones that deserve it the most) could be helped in a smaller way. If you dont have money for Adobe you can only help them with a better wood construction for their house.

So yes i think it is good that we worked in the community with allot of different people in it. So the whole community could benefit in a certain way. on the other side it was also really good if we could target more remote poor families because otherwise they never get a better standart of living.

One family lived in greater poverty than the other, but all families are dealing with a lot of problems caused by their kapitalist environment. Therefor the families that were chosen deserve to get an opportunity on more indepence towards this system. I believe these were all families that were a victim of this system and are struggling with life because of poverty. I don't know if a support tool is able to provide a sollution for the greater picture, but it could help them towards a way out.

The poor families and the ones which never had any oppportunity to learn and improve theirs lifes is the right target to be followed by the studio. Anyway i my opinion the selection needs to be happen more carefully next time.

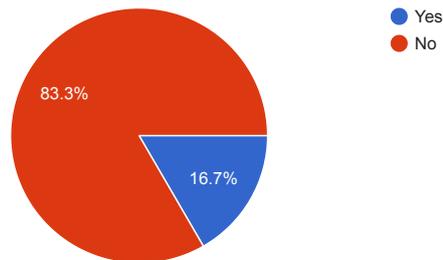
As explained above.

You can say you failed with picking out the family of Cleophas. However if you see the living circumstances they deserve a better house. It is a shame that mostly the fathers would not work properly with us. Moreover not seeing us as helping people with the right answers but keeping to their own opinions. I think there is more needed than just building a house for them. They also need social workers

to sort out some problems around here. If that would not work out, you should not wanting to change their environment, because probably they wont want to change it.

Have you ever participated in a development aid project organized by an foreign NGO?

6 responses



If yes please list and describe the projects

1 response

During my studies I have been part of NGO like Easa and Meds in Ljubana and Cadiz where the idea was to gather all young professionals and students of architecture to one specific city and design and build for the community.

The other project is called Ecoweek, I did volunteered for about 4 years as the manager and organizer of this project in Prishtina. I also was tutoring in Ecoweek in Greece and Netherland.

What does the rural housing studio project/internship offer that other NGO's/companies do not?

6 responses

Here I have been teamed up with an architect which is a huge plus for me. The informal setting of a small NGO was also very nice.

other Ngo's mostly help with external funds. Building schools or water wells. this is really nice so that the people could have a better standart of living but on the other side it leaves them undeveloped and depend on external things and people.

with this methodology we could make the people self reliant and i think that is a really good thing. I dont think everything should be self reliant but making your own house is certainly something that should. If you dont have to send money for all the buildings you can use that money to buy schoolbooks or something that is harder to recreate yourself. in this way you could have way more people with the same amount of money. Also working with the people instead of companies is something good. it keeps to knowledge widely accessible to everybody that wants it. Everyone could benefit instead of one construction company that makes the dwellings

A direct relationship between research and practice. The researcher is the practioneer. Therefor as a researcher you're able to understand the root of the problem and provide and answer to this problem. The poverty created by money will never be solved with money. The rural housing studio provides a sustainable way of developing by sharing knowledge. This is the only durable way to development.

The oppportunity to design and build in a total freedom and all based on yout capacities. Also, new ways to do research.

The main difference would be the transfer of knowledge. NGOs have fixed methods of operation, that are controlled by policies and budgets that are usually not flexible. The RHS allows the individuals to operate within their budgets and therefore triggers self-reliance within the families. In terms of Context, probably more should be done to evaluate the cultural and social behaviours affecting the community in order to have better success. Allowing the different teams to try out different approaches also enhances the

number of solutions left behind by the project compared to NGO's who would most commonly have a 'one solution fits all' attitude.

When I applied for the internship it was because of the opportunity of doing an internship abroad. Also they give you the opportunity to run through a whole building project in just six months. Besides that you are given a lot of responsibilities, you are a student but around here you can work as a team with an architect who is willing to share ideas on a same level.

Before you joined the Rural Housing Studio

If you look at your education and experience how would you have normally approached the rural housing studio project? (research, analysis, methodology & responsibilities)

6 responses

Not nearly as long of a research period, I would get the information I need by speaking to local professionals. For the wishes of the family I would just have a sit with the family and have a back and forth over some designs, over the course of a few days(not months).

with the research i would do it more from my computer and less in the field. i think i would never observe a family for a whole day as an example. it would still look at all the different possibility and still look at the best possible outcome.

for the analyses it would work on the data the same because in the support it is also not really mentioned how to proces this data, only i would never come up with the coding an maybe it would be less divided in different chapters and phases.

this methodology is somewhat new for me. if i look back i didnt think i would use the whole capacity of the family without adding something. Also to really try to train the whole community instead of a family is something new.

for the responsibilities i dont really know. But i wouldnt do it in a way that we werent allowed to talk with each other. i know why we werent allowed in a research perspective but if i would approach a 'blank' project i wouldnt make the teams so independent.

It would have been very similar. If it was not for the support tool I would have started the building phase much earlier than we did. Because our main aim is providing comment on the support tool we had to finish all chapters, although I knew we wouldn't have enough time to finish the building phase. With the support tool we dug deep into cultural and social backgrounds. I think I would have added more research on local materials and craft. Eventually the knowledge exchange would be taking place during construction, therefore a more thorough research in local building and materials would have provided a better mutual understand between us and them.

Research would be less detailed, and I would not give such an importance to share knowledge and train people. The other part like analyses and methodologies might be very similar I think.

In a normal situation, I would have began with an investigation of alternative methods in the built environment that i would have wanted to share with the community. i would have chosen a bigger more engaging project, probably a community building eg. a multipurpose hall/church/classrooms.(this probably would have brought in more participation from the users of the building) Methodology would most likely involve the carrying out of several workshops on building before engaging in the project. The design would be controlled by a smaller group with consideration being taken through suggestions in workshops. however the main design decisions would be final, based on the architects/engineers in the project. Analysis would generally be based on the level of skills transferred to the main participants of the project. Responsibilities would be granted to a few members of the community with probably the lead role going to the architects so as to ensure better control of the project.

I would have probably used the information out of all the courses I followed at school. For building up a good structure I would use Jellema, Bouwbesluit, NEN and Basisboek Bouwkunde as a red string in the project.

How would you normally describe your role as a professional (architect/student) in this type of project (what type of work would you do: inventory, design brief, design, technical drawing, building, financial calculations, structural calculations, etc.)?

6 responses

I have a knack for the mathematical side, so that is what I will most likely gravitate to. But to say that that would be the only thing that I would want to do would be false, I love to do many other jobs as well.

a project in a rural african context always requires some type of research. everything is new and i could see me working behind my computer and in the field to collect the data. Also for the design brief i would be part of all the steps but not the responsible at the end because im still a student. making the design i would have something to say but probably in a firm i couldnt have this big of an impact on it. for the drawings and calculation you would probably do some but not everything. in a regular internship you maybe have to finalized a already decided detail but not think of all the problems and really elaborate on that. Same with the calculations you would calculate a whole project because a regular project is just to big and complex for that.
with this project your responsibility lies way higher than with a regular project. otherwise your probably only part of some of the steps not all and definitely making all the steps in full extend.

It would start with looking for the data you need for a proper design answer to local problems. I would make a design as an answer to there problems with the necesarry related constructional sollutions. Also I would have been building with locals to explain the imbedded ideas and sollutions.

mostly in Design brief, design, drawing and managing the building phase.

my main role would be creting the design brief, technical drawings, producing structural designs that are as a result of design decisions, producing approximate bills of quantities, control of tendering process, and eventually overall project management. depending on the size of the project, if small - contractor.

As a student I would expect that the architect would give me some main tasks as the inventory and the design brief. Also I would expect to do the technical drawings and given the opportunity of doing the calculations but not without a double check of the architect.

How would you normally describe your role in relation to a client (in this case family)?

6 responses

Me as a "professional" would have knowledge about building technology and there my word would be final. In the spatial design it would be the other way around, the family's will would be final because it is in fact their house.

more formal. the family would have their wishes and you would use those wishes for the design. but now you where involved in everyday life and got to know the family way more than it was otherwise the case.

As an design, engineering and constructional adviser. But I would have left the total financial responsibility in the hands of the family. I would have responsibility over building, and they over the financial part. Although I would have made myself in power of ordering and choosing materials.

My role in the project is as a leader of the project where the goal is to find the best solutions for the families needs.

My role would generally be professional. Brief and information exchange meetings. Social interactions are dependent on the personality of the client. I would make all the design decisions, assist in creation and development of the brief, advice on cost related issues and decisions and source for other professionals required by the client.

the work of the family/client would be to make all payments direct to the required contractors/subcontractors, source for labour, and cater for any costs outside my normal activities.

I would make sure that I am available for their questions and insecurities and make them feel comfortable in sharing them. Also I would make sure that I can explain pro's and con's of some design decisions and also slightly push them in a better solution. For the family I would hope that they are open for new ideas and willing to try them out or even consider them.

What would you consider a success (success criteria of the project) in realizing a family house in a rural developing scenario?

6 responses

This is hard to answer objectively, because ever since I signed up for this I would be helping/teaching the family. Being the most objective I could be I would say: finish a house for the chosen family.

finishing the house is something that is a really visible succes. making a complete design with the materials and funds there are. and also trying to build in a sustainable new* (*even better) way.

The exchange of knowledge in order to make locals a bit more independant.

Building a house where all the community can afford to build, being able to have as many volunteers to help as possible and at the same time teach them how to build in different methodologies.

in a rural developing context, the success of the project would be on the satisfaction expressed by the family, in terms of brief definition, improvement of housing conditions- if any, and level of engagement and involvement by the team taking part.

Finish the house with opportunities to extend it or improve it. Moreover invent a building method that can improve the whole community.

In your role as a professional (architect/engineer/student) would you normally engage into this type of housing project as a foreigner alone or in a team? Please explain why and if applicable, with which professional(s).

6 responses

Me as a student would love to be teamed up with a true professional, because having experienced this I would have never succeeded to this level with a team of students. As for which professionals I would choose that would be most likely an architect, alone or with student.

i woudnt approach such project alone. Because of the complexity you would need a team member. If this team member should be an architect or another student is debatable. With an architect you have to ability to learn allot from them but on the otherway talking this problem with two equals also makes you to rise on a higher skill level. for the professional i would prefer an architect over an engineer because architect would come up with more creative and new solutions to the problems. And engineer would think to practical, which is sometimes really nice but you woudnt get a special new cool house

I would go with a multi-professional team. I am an engineer and an architect, but I felt like I was doing many other professions which in my apoin could have been done better, faster and more accurate by professionals who love to do this kind of specific research. The composition of this team should be strongly related to the specific problems and context in general. Antropologists, Sociologists, Architects, Engineers, experienced constructionworkers, etc.

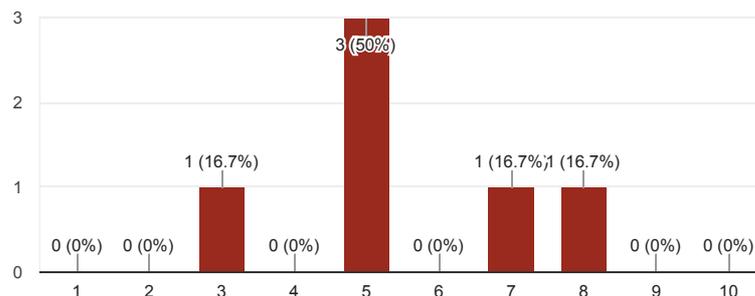
Two minds are always better than one. I think it is much better to work with someone than work alone in many cases, and the combination might be 1 architect and one student of architecture or the combination between architects and engineers.

Normally as a team, consisting of an architect, an architecture student, an on-call engineer, and a local with some level of controlled influence in the community.

I would come in a team, however a team with slightly the same cultural exposures and thinking ways. Within the team I would propose to have at least a architect and a social worker. The architect is needed to guide the engineering student in the good direction and learn them new procedures. The social worker would be a good idea because you deal with a lot of personal issues of a family, where in this context, you could really help them out with professional help.

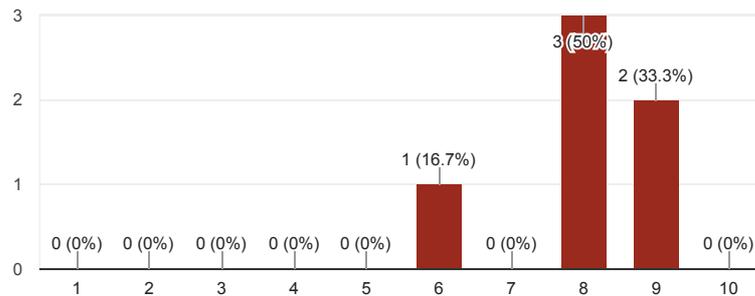
Do you think you were sufficiently theoretically educated (design methods/etc.) to work on projects in rural developing context such as Mt. Elgon?

6 responses



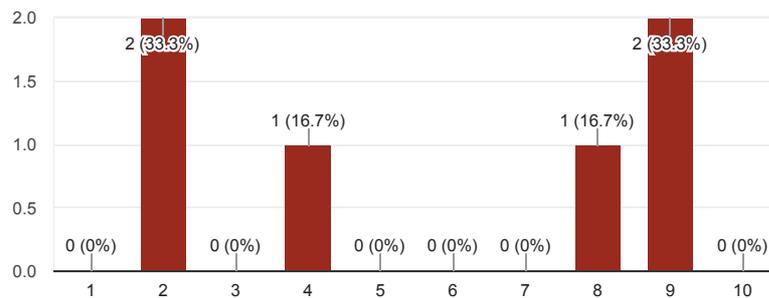
When you applied for the project how important did you think design would be in the entire process of the project?

6 responses



Do you think you were sufficiently practically educated (measuring, pegging, masonry, etc.) to work on projects in rural developing context such as Mt. Elgon?

6 responses



Could you please explain why?

6 responses

I have had no practical experience at all. The only "experience" I could rely on would be me helping with diy projects around the house, and the fact that I am quite handy.

I think we learned a lot about research by doing it yourself on the other side we didn't really get a lot of different methodologies but I knew a thing or two about cheap sustainable housing. But we didn't really get class for this.
 When I think about such a project I would emphasize it probably more on the design than the realization and teaching the community. For the physical building phase I didn't really learn a lot about cheap building methods. I know what to look for when you make a foundation but we didn't learn how to make a foundation without using cement and only using local rocks. You know it has to deal with different kinds of forces etc. but now you specifically these methods.

Through experience on construction sites, internships and much drawing experience. If I would have done this 10 years ago in the same age as the students I would have totally relied on my leading Architect.

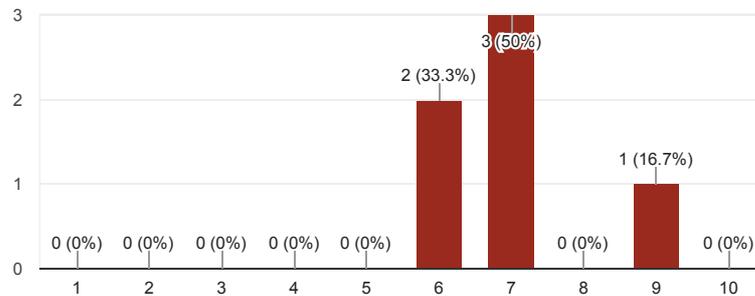
I did not get all the information from my studies but based on my working experience I have been working and testing different natural building materials in Kosovo for about 3 years and working in the architectural studios I had the chance to design and build houses before.

I thought that design would be a bit important, which turned out to be a naive assumption. :) With regard to practical experience, i would say i had enough based on my level of training in University and experience I have acquired over the years working in construction sites. sufficiently theoretically educated, would be a 50/50. not pretty sure how to measure this. Nothing prepares you for cultural differences and experiences.

At Avans they don't offer a lot of courses about designing in rural environments, only with a few small design assignments you could go wild, only if you were interested in it. Then the practical education is not there at all. To be sufficiently practically educated you should at least have done MBO before coming to HBO.

Do you think you were sufficiently educated in research (objectivity, bias, data gathering, etc.) to work on projects in rural developing context such as Mt. Elgon?

6 responses



Could you please explain why?

6 responses

Doing research is something that Avans forces us to do a LOT, so doing research is not new to me. Doing research in a living environment as this however, this is completely new to me.

i think we learned in avans how to gather data and use this. i always really liked to do proper research and being able to defend your whole design. On methodologies it probably wouldnt be this one. Because we where not educated on any self reliant solutions at all. only get the money and build.

A Master of Science on the University of Eindhoven taught me all about doing research.

In most of the point I find myself educated enough to work on such a project but for example data gathering was one of them that I learned during the project.

I already had research education gained in my studies. The research however should have offered more preparation for data collection, review and objectivity.

I think it is a balance between my interest and the courses the school offered. They offer you a lot of freedom when it comes to research. Only they don't pay attention to data gathering etc.

Looking back at your education which topics do you believe should have been addressed more to work on this type of project in this type of context?

6 responses

Practicals, for sure.

building in different ways than the standart (mostly concrete ones) if you look at the possibilities of rammed earth, adobe, wood construction, natural stones, earthbags etc. it would be cool to learn more sustainable building ways.

- working as an independant professional
- construction

Design and build as a need and not as a luxury, working more with sustainable materials, knowing the culture before you design.

Cultural context and objectivity in design
environmental behaviour studies - i.e. the social impact and relations between humans and built environment projects eg. low cost housing

Designing in different climates. Collecting information and data and putting it together right.

Could you please explain why?

6 responses

You need to generally know what you are talking about when discussing with locals. Having practical knowledge would also give you a greater understanding of materials and building methods, this in turn helps you with designing.

i think that you could definitely build long lasting really good houses in this way. also to emphasize more in sustainability would be really cool.

Because you have to filter the answers to your questions from the context yourself. Answering some question towards engineering on which complex calculations could have been done in order to get a lower building cost, or to better expect what the constructional need would be for a building in this environment.

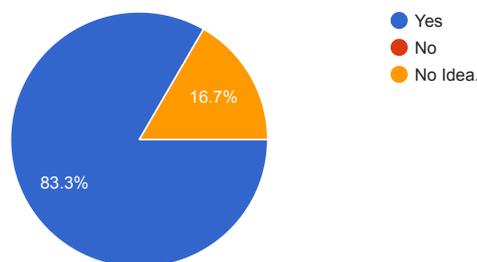
all of these I mentioned before I believe that have the main role of building wisely and making a better life to someone.

Working in the rural context posed more socio-economic challenges than technical challenges. eg. acceptance to change or alternative solutions when the community already have predefined mindsets on which solutions are best for them.

Avans is really focused on western building methods, what is understandable because we live in a western world. However when it comes to understanding of architecture and designing you should know all the sorts and kinds. For collecting data and research they should offer a offside course. It should be just like english, a side course who offers you the opportunity to grow in a pretty important side of management.

Would these additions to your education also help you in realizing projects in your own country/context?

6 responses



Could you please explain why?

6 responses

It wouldn't be just for these kind of projects, but for knowledge in general. It would help people detailing so much if they would have to make a physical model of it, for example.

i think that in the netherlands it would be also really cool to make appartement buildings with a wood construction instead of steel and concrete. or make cool houses with rammed earth. Just google it it looks really nice :)

For the exact same reasons

During the time I was studying I realized that I need to be the change I want to see in my city. I founded an NGO and since then I kept realizing many successful projects in Kosovo. Some of the biggest project were Ecoweek and Eco-house. The second one is still in progress and was chosen best green project f 2016, where the idea is to build houses with rammed earth material for poor families in Kosovo. After the experience in RHS I think I am even more convinced that I should continue to work on the things I have been working for a while now.

But it would be worth a try. So far I do not know to which extent architecture can impact social behaviour and it would provide a good investigation question. Probably my cultural community would react the same. But i would like to know whether preparing adequately to deal with social issues would have made a difference.

I am not interesting in designing, however a course in collecting and gathering data and information who help me a lot in becoming a pro in management.

During the Rural Housing Studio

How would you describe your role as a professional in this project (architect/student) in comparison to your role in previous working experience (inventory, design brief, design, technical drawing, building, etc.)?

6 responses

I wouldn't say that I really had a defined role in the project, we did most of the tasks together. the only time we really split up was during the later phases of the designing, where I did calculating and corne made the technical drawings.

because your building for a real family with their money your way more responsible. if you fuck up you ruined their house. in the netherlands the responsibility lies way lower they are always people checking your work more and you get less important tasks.

The relationship between the client and me as a professional was very close. We got into family issues which distracted me from my position. I would rather keep a distance from the specific family in order to not loose view of the general idea and that is developing building for many people in this area.

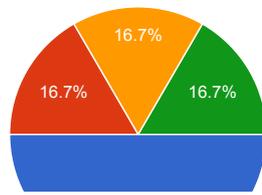
More responsibility based that I was in an unknown environment. Working in a place where the culture s different, the language is different, the challenge of designing and building the best was bigger.

I was the lead consultant, balancing between students and the family. working alongside a student was new,

I was given the opportunity to be a part of the whole building phase. However I noticed that it was hard for Jackson to give it out of hands, so I mainly focused on the management, which are described as my competences I wanted to develop. I took mainly care of the design brief, technical drawings, calculations and the planning.

Do you think the appointed family needed your help to realize an improved house?

6 responses



- Yes
- No
- House: yes Improved: no
- to a certain extent yes.

Could you please explain why?

6 responses

It hurts to say, but this family didn't need our help. They had all the capacities and they could have easily done a project on their own. This does not say however that we didn't add anything to the community. We left out a lot of nonsense the local "experts" deem necessary. They would be able to build a house but not improved, the house would be as all the "permanent" houses that already are in the community.

they current house wasnt that bad. but still really shitty in comparison with home. Also they didnt have an kitchen and enough bedrooms and space.

We provided them with a local building materials in the form of Adobe bricks. They were never be able and they would never even have imagened that they were able to make a building material out of their own soil. Also in all local housing some fundamental design descission for earth building got lost. We show these old sollutions to environmental circumstances in our design of the building.

We tought them that by using the same materials they always did to build a house, they can have a much better living quality, more beautiful house and even cheaper house. All of these were new for them.

with regard to designing a plan, and trying to provide low cost solutions in building- yes
with regard to alternative methods of building- no . Cleophas had a set mind of building with stone and with regard to putting up a house, he would have just done it with a local fundi. all we were doing there was providing free labour.

he continued to build with our plan which will probably be more effective than had he just tried to build with a fundi without a plan, which is the common case in the area.

Cleophas was not open for new ideas, so in the end we only designed a house for him and he will build it his own way. He was a very stubborn man who kept telling us yes but meant no. In the end he could have designed his own house, he would just not have the resources to print a plan or something.

Why do you think they were not able to realize an improved house without your help?

6 responses

The people in this community don't posses the knowledge needed to improve building. The way it works now is to overdimension a house with concrete and then it stands. All the things people know are tought by local fundis, who also gets tought by a fundi. There is no source of knowledge anywhere to be seen, people just do as there has already been done.

because they didnt have the funds to build a concrete or brick house and there wasnt the knowledge of cheap building methodes that are more durable than the current mud house they have.

It seems as if the people in the area generally miss an educational/research attitude towards their environment. They are unable to look for answers in their environment through research. This is what we did for them.

No change to have trainings on building before, no space to get new information, no hope that they can change their lives without money being involved.

For cleophas, probably i would attribute it to negligence. He has probably more resources at his disposal than most people in the community but he was too proud to build another mudhouse. but didn't have enough resources readily available for a stone house. Therefore, the RHS providing alternative solutions in between would have been an added advantage for his family.

Money and not being open for new ideas.

What were the most important improvements that needed to be made, please prioritize the following terms: design, materials, building methodology, planning, costing (estimating and lowering), and building knowledge. (you are allowed to add terms you find missing)

6 responses

Building knowledge, building methodology, Craftsmanship, materials, Costing, Design, planning

- 1 building knowledge, getting to know cheap and better solutions.
- 2 building methodology, making sure that the people building in deferent better ways
- 3 materials, using their local materials in a better way
- 4 costing making sure you realize your project in a cheaper way then normal.
- 5 the design make a proper plan and not just some mud with mabati on it because whatever.
- 6 planning, making sure that you could finish the house on time with the funds you have and not run into problems later on.

The proper design and engineering of a building (fundamental design descissions in a structure towards environmental circumstances). Also the way how can be dealt with local materials was an important improvement. But planning-wise or research-wise is too much to ask from these locals. They think differently from a cultural point of view. They live differently from day to day and therefor mak descissions differently. This is not wrong or right, therefor it is not desired to change this.

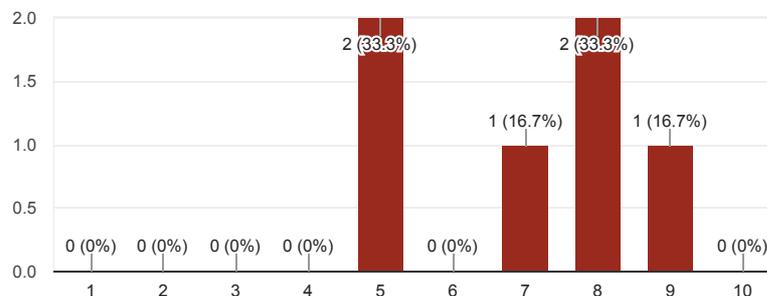
Building methodology,
costing,
building knowledge,
materials,
design and planning

Design- in terms of prioritizing spaces. a plan that gives them an efficient use of small spaces in contrast to the current method where extension of new spaces on the existing building is usually the case.
Effective use of materials- they already knew which soil has worked well over years with the least maintenance, but they continued to build in the same way as before.
building knowledge- the use of a foundation to raise the building from the ground to avoid moisture decay on the walls and to provide a solid base for the house.
Attention to detail/workmanship.- some of the houses built in the traditional way are quite good and seem to be well maintained meaning that some individuals know how to maintain high standards of building. This is in contrast to most houses, where maintenance does not take place giving the look of a sorry state of affairs in the community

When it comes to Cleophas the most important thing was the costing, he had no idea on what a house would cost. The rest is unimportant because he was to stubborn to take any advise from us. So I would say the most important improvement in this community would be building a house with a new building method for very few money and let the community see it works. You should not use the money of the family to find out a new building method, it is all they got.

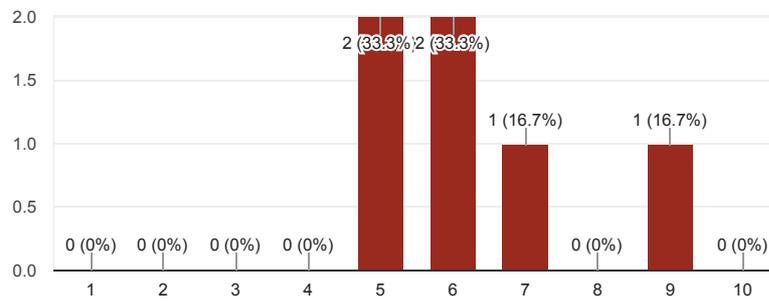
To what extent was the family involved during the research phase?

6 responses



To what extent was the family involved during the design phase?

6 responses



Who of the family was involved? Please list the names and relations (e.g. Mary - daughter)

6 responses

Cleophas - father, Stella - mother

musa (father) , during the research and design phase he was the most dominant. the kids (collins, abigael) and the mother (everlyne) didnt interacted that much. but when you look at the workshops they came up with good alternatives. But in general it was mostly the father that came with the data from the interviews etc.

During the workshops and other methods of researching to gather data as design input, Stella, Cleophas, Mercy, Brenda and Bryan were involved. Eventually we present the sketch design to all these members and they gave their opinions about different design concepts. Eventually money had his impact on the design, this is where only Stella and Cleophas kept involved because they simply own and control the money of the family.

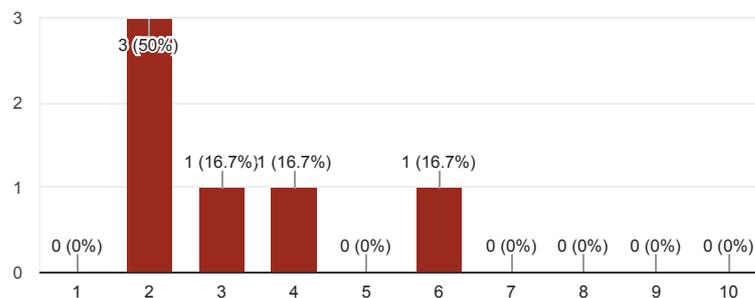
Musa-father
 Everlyne-mother
 Collis-son
 Abigael-doughter
 Sandra-cousin

Cleophas, Evelyne, Edah, Josephine, Angela

I was not part of this process.

To what extent was the family involved during the building phase?

6 responses



Who of the family was involved? Please list the names and relations (e.g. Mary - daughter)

6 responses

Brenda - daughter, Simon - Nephew

Collins (son) he helped almost everyday but because he's only 13 you couldn't expect a lot from him.
Musa (father) almost no involvement
Everlyne (wife) almost no involvement
Sandra, Abigail (daughters) almost no involvement only when you asked them directly.
Joseph (brother) a lot of involvement he was there almost everyday, worked also without direction.
Peter (brother) almost everyday there but only worked when you asked
Sande (nephew?) worked a lot but you had to ask him to do things.

Cleophas was managing mostly the ordering of materials and the spending of the money. This resulted in giving him power in decision making because they still think from day by day, which caused friction.
Brenda was involved in the beginning in measuring and reading drawings.
Mercy helped digging sometimes.
Faith helped together with Brenda with mixing of soil sometimes.
Other family members were not involved in the building process.

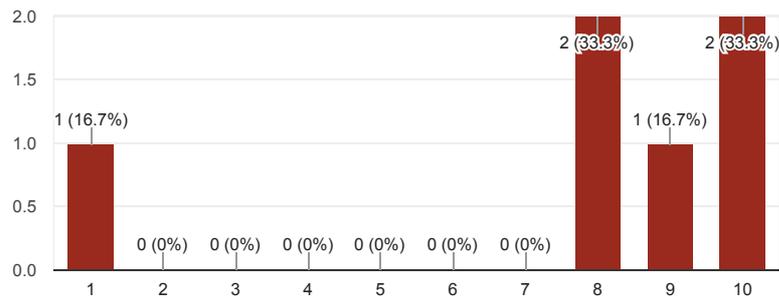
Everlyne-mother
Collins-son
Josef-brother
Peter-brother
Abigail-daughter
Sande-nephew

Cleophas, Josephine

Only Cleophas was involved and he would only be there after calling him multiple times or when he needed to deliver materials.

How important do you think it is the inhabitants are able to maintain, extend or replicate the house without 'external' (your) help?

6 responses



Could you please explain why?

6 responses

To say that I want total independence is not true, however it is good for the community to learn from us. In that way the community is not reliant on "us" or other big companies. In this way you don't force people to learn building who are not willing to learn. You would get the people that want to build better/cheaper houses, and this way the community can grow in that aspect. Because to get every family to learn how to build on their own would mean to go back to the time that there was no money and to living as one true community. The hard fact is that there already is money, they have made the "step forward" and now this is a massive factor that you need to work around and not fight against.

I like the idea of self-reliant solutions. For instance the neighbour of Musa will probably build the same house next year and that was otherwise never possible.

They have the money to pay for labour, and they believe that this is the right thing to do; creating jobs. Cleophas as a more rich member of the community seemed forced to do this. The community expects this from him. This is his position within the community.

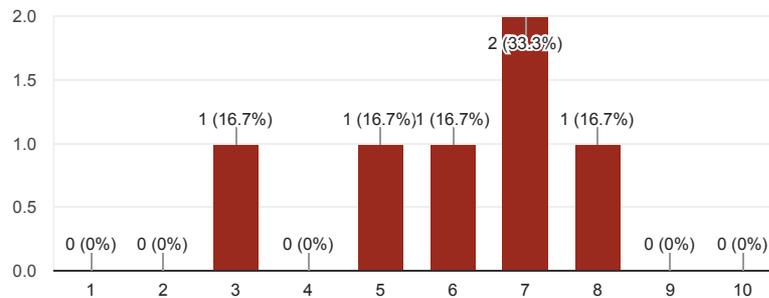
They will not need our help at the time, they will have enough capacities to maintain the house and also to be able to build new houses in the future.

Reliability of external help is a problem that most rural communities in Africa are struggling with. A reliance on help or the perception that they need help is what is slowing down development. They need to appreciate their situation and work towards improving it or maintaining it themselves. Probably more of a social issue than a technical issue.

They got a wrong image about good stable houses. On TV and internet they will see only stone houses, so they will think if you want a good house you need a lot of money. If we are able to show them a building method, whom can save you money and is just as stable as a stone house, you could improve their houses. Also when you teach them how, they can improve the community step by step and create a better environment for themselves.

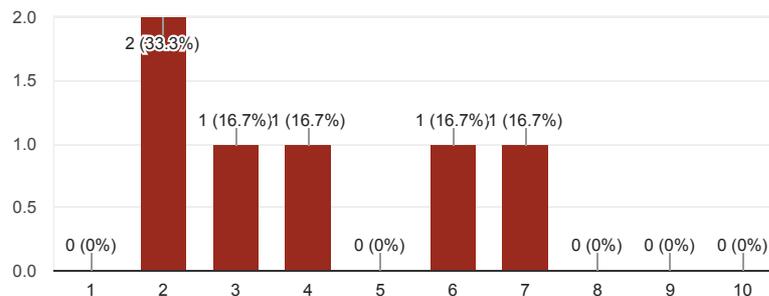
To what extent did the support help you to formulate a new housing solution that would enable the family to maintain, extend or replicate it?

6 responses



To what extent you felt forced to use certain solutions (materials, building method, etc.) by the project organization in addition to the support, during the project?

6 responses



Could you explain why?

6 responses

We had a couple of talks where we got our eyes opened, which is also influence. For example I came to Michiel with technical drawing, then he would comment "where is your reinforcement mesh?" This hugely influenced us, we stated to doubt every choice we made. In the end we stuck to what we designed to do nonetheless

without the support we wouldnt taught them that much. so than they wouldnt be able. we knew the organization preferred sustainable but it was our vision we pushed through.

The support helped us toward finding these solutions. I think we were able to formulate and execute our own solutions to the found questions.

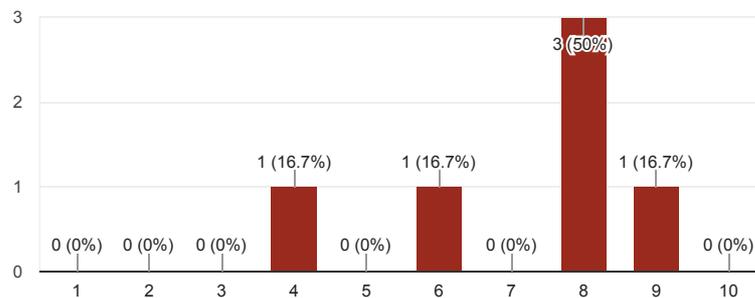
We felt it only on the roof design and material, which is directly related with the status of the family on the society. Based on that we decided to accept their wish and design the iron sheet roof.

Chapters in the support - ie design workshops were very relevant in formulating a brief and looking for solutions. the study of local typologies was also very relevant in establishing solutions that were not strange from the norm.
forced to use certain solutions- No. the last few chapters were leading in terms of solutions that could be offered but I did not pay much attention to the assumption that they were leading

In chapter 7? the support tool offers you two building methods while there are much more. Also the support is written on capacity, if you only look at the capacity your options get smaller by time. Besides that chapter 6 pushes you to look into different houses and do a soil test. However it does not pushes you very hard to look behind the house styles.

To what extent were you able to research, identify problems and articulate solutions by yourself besides the support (as a team)?

6 responses



Could you explain why?

6 responses

I think we had a more than capable team to identify and isolate problems we would encounter.

because the support doesnt provide solutions we had to identify the solutions by ourselves.

there were many problems to be solved engineering-wise that were unexplored through the support tool. By discussing with locals and experimenting (partially mentioned in the support tool in the form of experimenting with the soil for instnace) we were able to solve these problems.

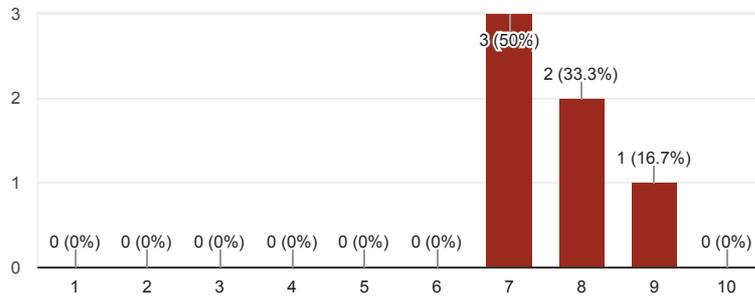
I can not give you an exact answer about this. We were focused in support and I can not know which of the information I got how.

I was able to do some research before the start of the project, and as the project continued, but a change of students in between the project halted most of the progress gained as we had to deal with new problems instead of concentrate on the issues at hand.

I have a Kenyan architect who had practice in building methods and is used to the environment, a big reason for identifying problems without the support.

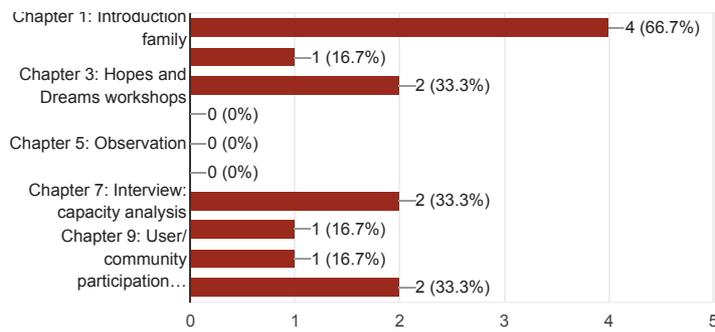
To what degree have you executed the project according to the support?

6 responses



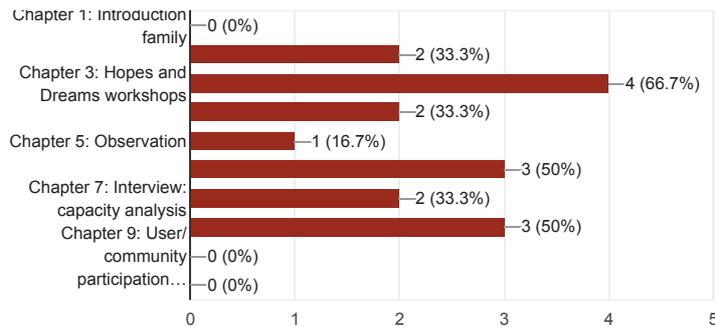
Which chapter(s) were valuable in understanding the context of the project?

6 responses



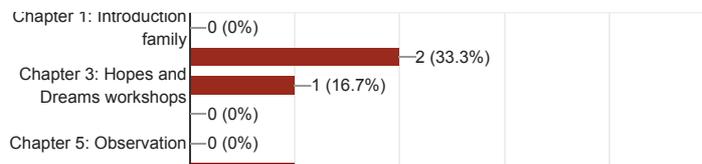
Which chapter(s) were valuable in the design of the project?

6 responses



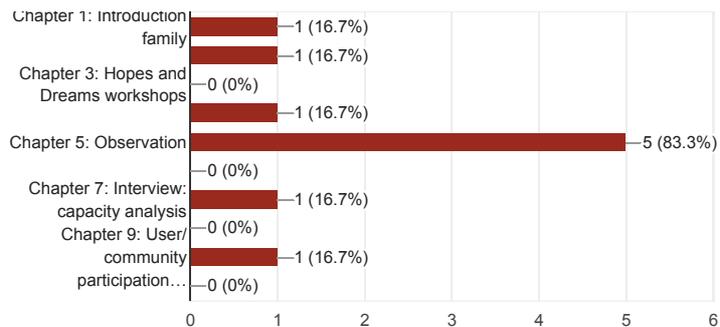
Which chapter(s) were valuable in increasing the self-reliance of the family?

6 responses



Which chapter(s) were the least valuable in the project?

6 responses



Please explain why they were not valuable?

6 responses

The observation taught us nothing we didn't already know, we found out that the father was a farmer and where the mother did her cooking and washing.

Chapter 7 because we did not get a lot of answers about the finances, and for tools there were also no answers given. for example we asked them about a measuring tape, which they couldn't get, but at the start of the building phase he borrowed one from his best friend.

Chapter 9 because we made a nice planning, but after 2 weeks we stopped looking at it because it was all messed up. It is nice to write down everything you need to do but the time we took to make the planning was wasted.

i didnt really get new information during the observation. we al ready got it during the interviews etc. mapping the area was fun to do but it didnt really matter where the shamba's and rivers where. you already got a general idea on how to position the house on the plot and you dont really have to look at all the neighbours. but i must say the soil tests where good! but mapping the shamba's not. and we already where looking at all the building typologies.

We were unable to control or plan the use of their capacities and we were unable to plan community participations because of a lack of interest in participating from the community itself.

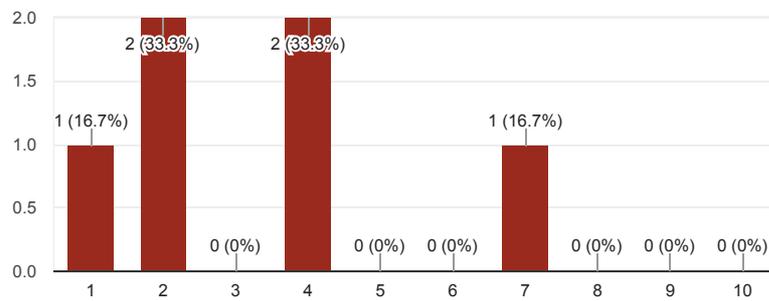
I would not consider any of them not valuable, but I think some of them are more detailed than it is needed. In my opinion I think some of the chapters might be combined together.

The family lied in most of the questions, therefore misleading us.
The family members more often than not felt uncomfortable with those chapters and kept questioning their usefulness.
I do not see the need for an observation of a daily routine with Cleophas' family since it was very unconventional. The house was rarely in use. and the daily activities were questionable.
Chapter 9 was because the community members never showed up. And those who did were just looking for a job.

A introduction is a personal thing about getting to know each other, it should not be a forced chapter. The mapping of the compound is not important because in our case the site was somewhere else and in the hopes and dreams workshop you get to know what the family wants in their new house. The observation is irrelevant because you already did a interview about their daily routine.

Do you think the observer/actor role in working in this type of project/context is important?

6 responses



Please explain why ?

6 responses

I find that if you have two capable souls it is useless to have one sit idle. I understand the theory behind having one person watch how you do something, and if you don't upset the family, but in my opinion it doesn't work. I have never thought: "This information we could only get with an observer".

on one way it was good to have a different perspective. on the other way i think we have done more with two actors and two observers. double role.
now sometimes we missed essential things because only one of us talked. and writing observation sheets could be done while where both actor.

There is not much time to evaluate your findings as an observer. Also by watching the taping or pictures this observer roll could be fulfilled afterwards. It is rarely needed.

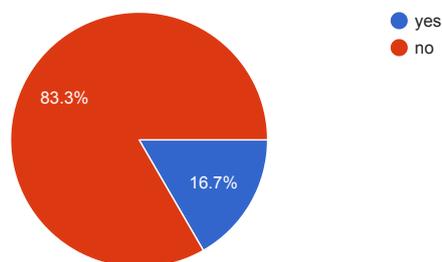
there were many times we needed each other help, like forgetting to say something, ask something. The observer helped in this case and also could observe everyone around, not only 1 specific person.

At any given time, one of the members is basically not doing productive work. The go pro and camera can record proceedings that can be reviewed at a later time.
The engagement of both individuals at a time would make the family more relaxed as individuals can be doing different activities with different family members and therefore saving on time.
The rural setup does not really understand what the role of an observer is and feels weird about it.

You should not take a observer/actor role every other day. Both persons in the team have their qualifications and thus different stronger parts. You should decide on command/assignment who is going to be the actor or observer not per day.

Did the observer/actor roles help you in the project?

6 responses



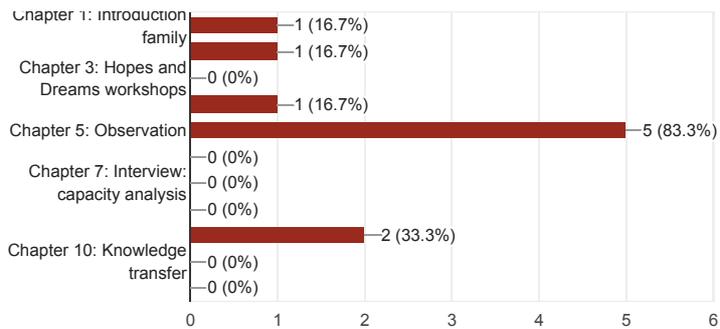
If yes, how did the observer/actor role help you in the project?

1 response

In mentioning something which I might have forgotten to ask and mention.

Which chapters could have been left out?

6 responses



Could you please explain why?

6 responses

Chapter 5 because if they won't tell you something in the interview then they will also not show it during the observation.

Chapter 6, most of it. Doing the soil tests was really good and helped us a lot, but walking around writing down where bushes are did not at all.

Chapter 9 Making the planning that did not work was not nice, but to show the planning to the community to see on who we can count also did not work at all. If you want someone to come you call them the day before, that is how it works.

it really didnt give any new data and it costed allot of time. and chapter 6 except the soil tests.

Not a lot of people tell the truth and they don't live to their promises. Sometimes it was even impossible to reach them

I wouldn't consider leaving out a chapter but combining some of them would be better.

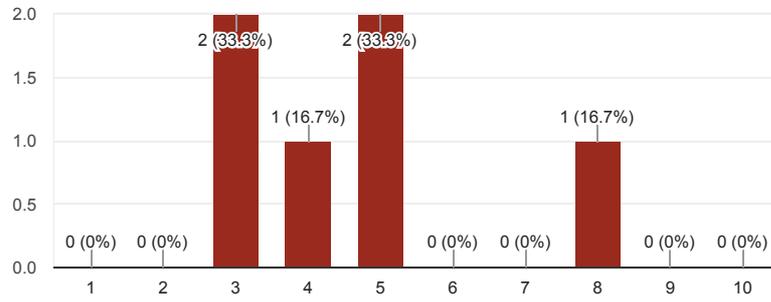
The first two felt irrelevant to the current context.
the 9th, in the context of a family home, most community members found it irrelevant to take part without receiving any economic gain.

A introduction is a personal thing about getting to know each other, it should not be a forced chapter. The mapping of the compound is not important because in our case the site was somewhere else and in the hopes and dreams workshop you get to know what the family wants in their new house. The observation is irllevant because you already did a interview about their daily routine.

To what extent was the family as a whole involved in realizing the house?

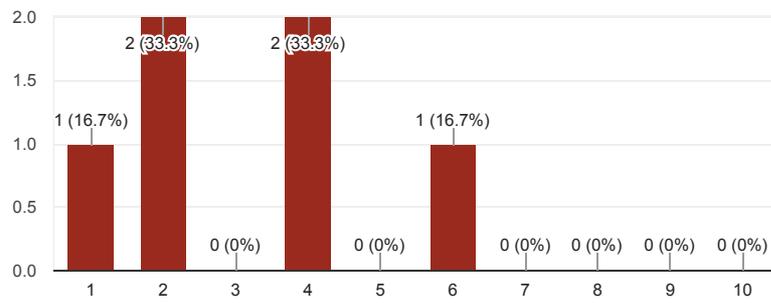
Pegging & Locating

6 responses



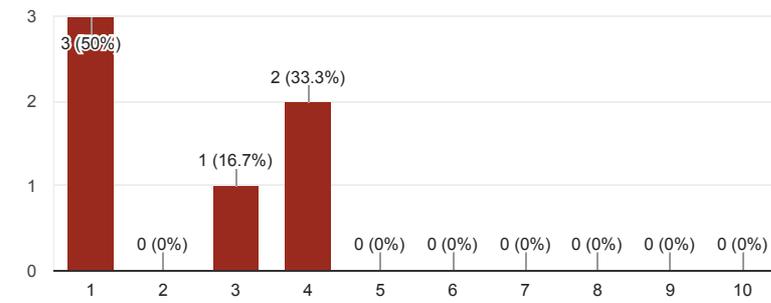
Foundation

6 responses



Floor

6 responses



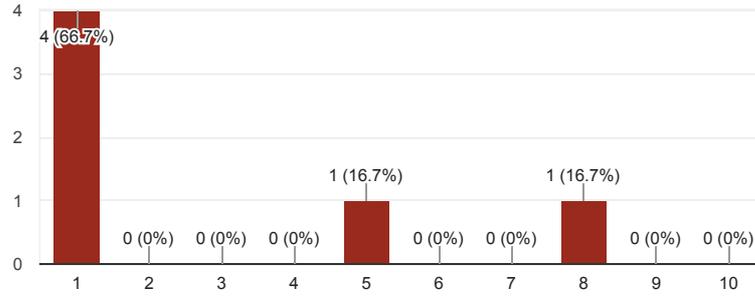
Walls

6 responses



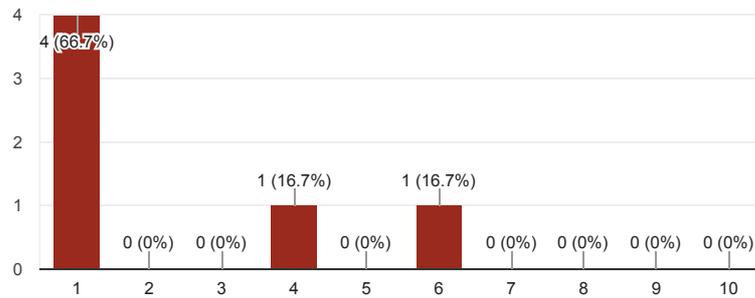
Roof

6 responses



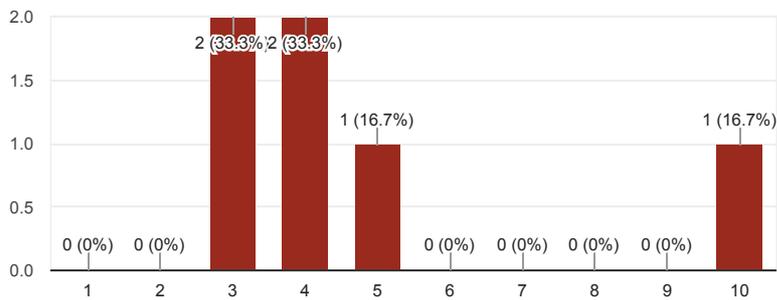
Finishes

6 responses



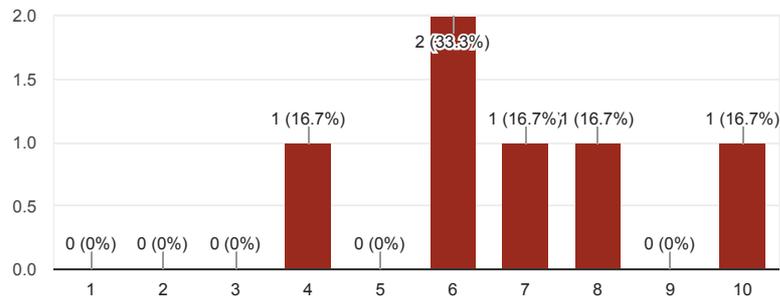
Making/Preparing building materials (foundation stones, bricks, etc.)

6 responses



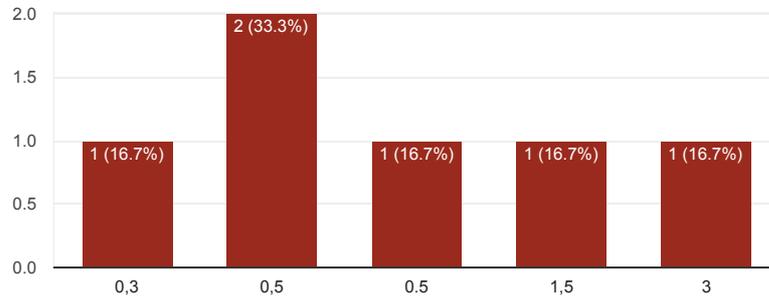
Ordering/organizing building materials & tools

6 responses



How many family members were helping on average each day?

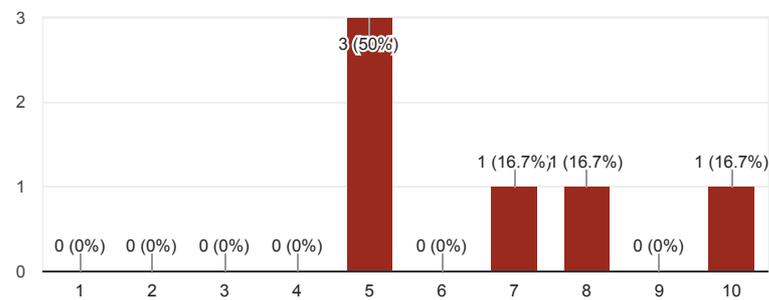
6 responses



To what extent was the community involved in realizing the house?

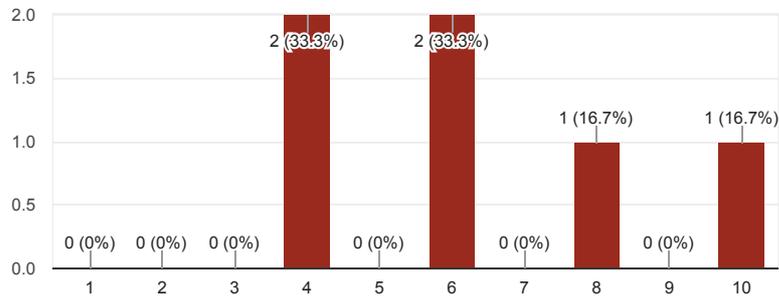
Pegging & Locating

6 responses



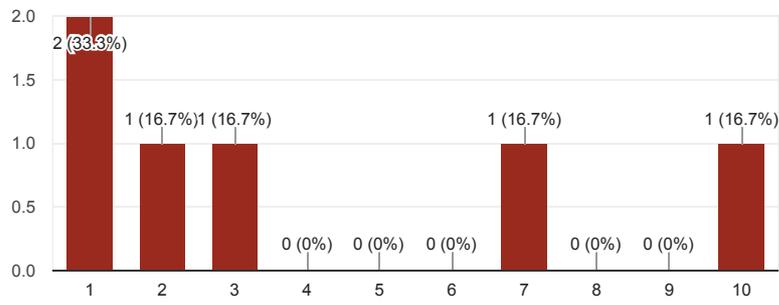
Foundation

6 responses



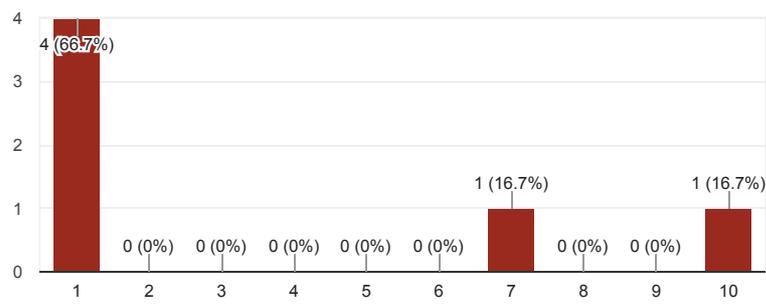
Floor

6 responses



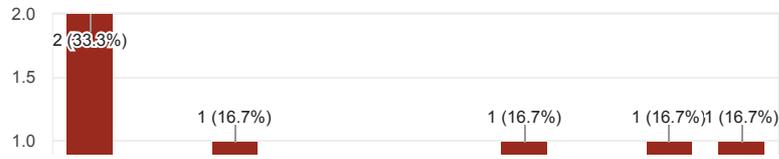
Roof

6 responses



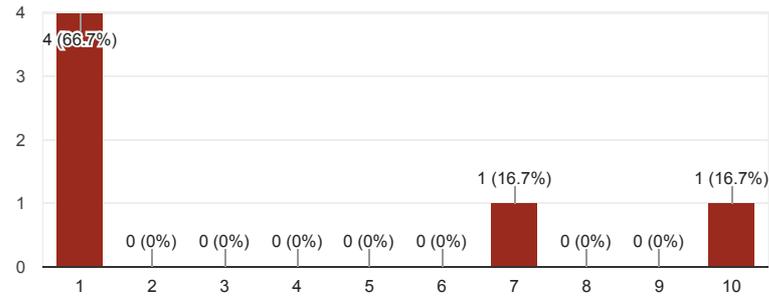
Walls

6 responses



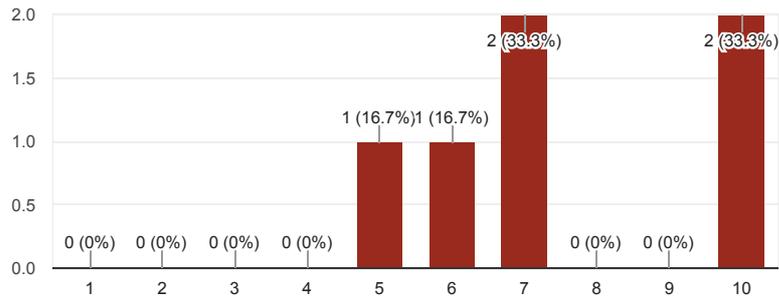
Finishes

6 responses



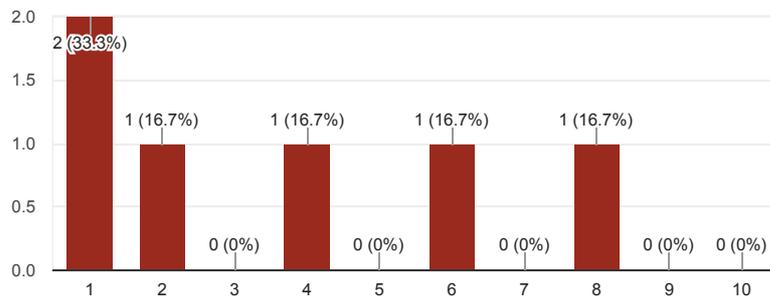
Making/Preparing building materials (foundation stones, bricks, etc.)

6 responses



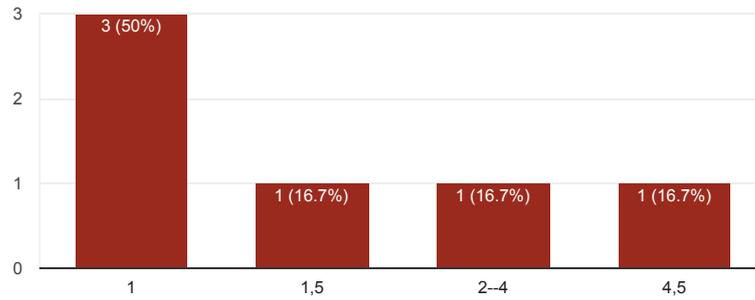
Ordering/organizing building materials & tools

6 responses



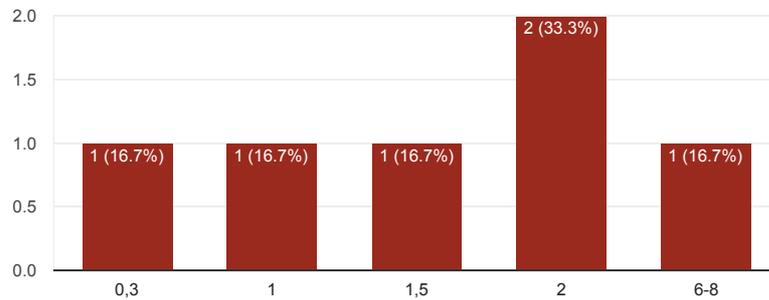
How many community members were being paid to help on average each day?

6 responses



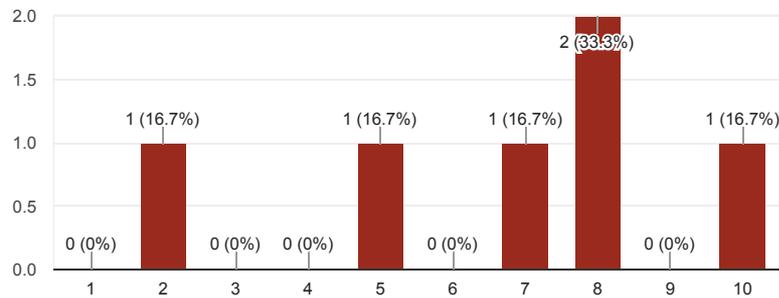
How many community members were not being paid to help on average each day?

6 responses



Did the community benefit from the project?

6 responses



Why did/didn't the community benefit from the project?

6 responses

Hard to say right now, but there are people who learned a lot. There is even an other project starting with our bricks

some people really got new knowledge and skills and they are hopefully able to replicate it.

Some helped and experienced the creation of the adobe bricks, many people are provided with the evidence that their local soil could be used as a building material.

learning new ways of building, cheap ways.

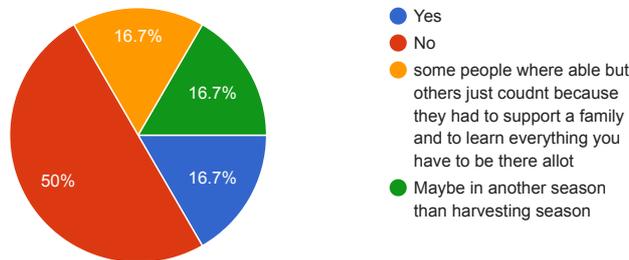
the few individuals who found the interlocking blocks as a new and beneficial method of building, at least have some exposure to a new system of building.

But for Cleophas eventually building a stone house, means that no one will see the benefits of interlocking blocks from the current phase of the project

The first days of the project we had some young guys working with us. We were able to teach them a lot about leveling, mixing and pouring concrete. However, when they were sure Cleophas was not going to pay them they bailed on us.

Do you believe community members could participate in the project only for food and knowledge ex-change?

6 responses



Do you believe the community members that came to volunteer were in a position to help without payment? Why?

6 responses

No, because we actually had a paid person leave because he had to earn more money somehow to support his wife and child. It depends on the people of course, but the majority needs cashflow to stay alive.

no, because alot of people had everyday responsibilities. the family shoudnt get paid but the workers should get a small fee. not to make a profit and to work for the money but to buy evening diner and being able to work on the construction site everyday.

Those who could chose to do so for a few days. But to arrange a building team in order to build this house, payments need to be made.

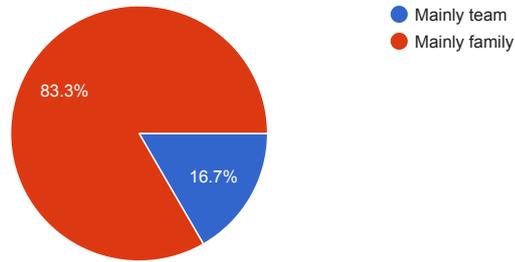
Most of our helpers were volunteers and I think they were very interested to learn how to build their houses. Also working with people from Europe seemed to be exited for them which in a way helped to have more volunteers involved.

Yes. They were in a position to help without payment, since they had the time to show up and observe, but they chose not to since they are already accustomed to the exchange of money for any services rendered. They did not see the need for gaining knowledge at the time as a priority on their goals at the time.

No, because if they come working for food, they are fed. But what about their family, they need to collect money or food for their home too.

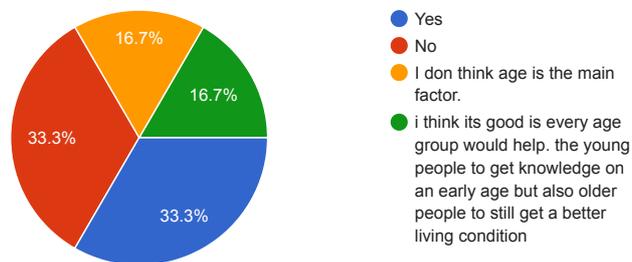
Did most of the community members come and help mainly because you asked them or because of the family?

6 responses



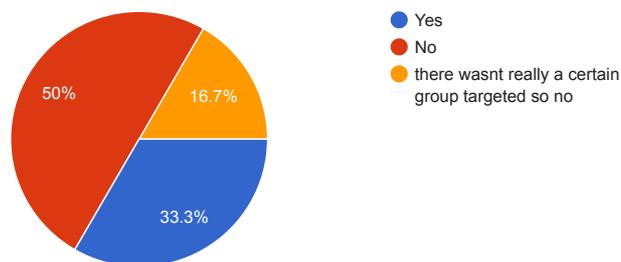
Do you believe the right age group (community members) was considered to help in the project?

6 responses



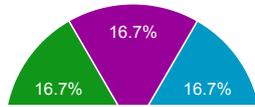
Do you believe if a different age group was targeted more community members would have participated?

6 responses



Who should be primarily responsible for getting community members involved

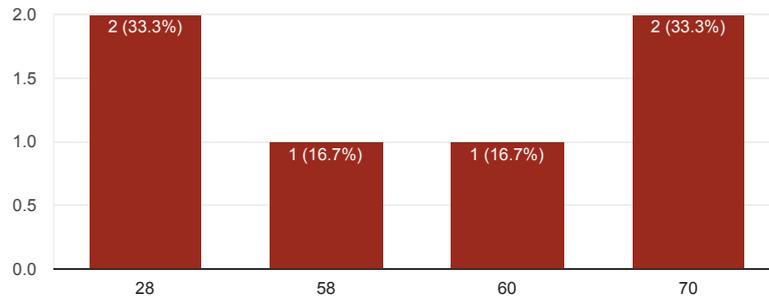
6 responses



- The team
- The family
- The organization of the rural housing studio

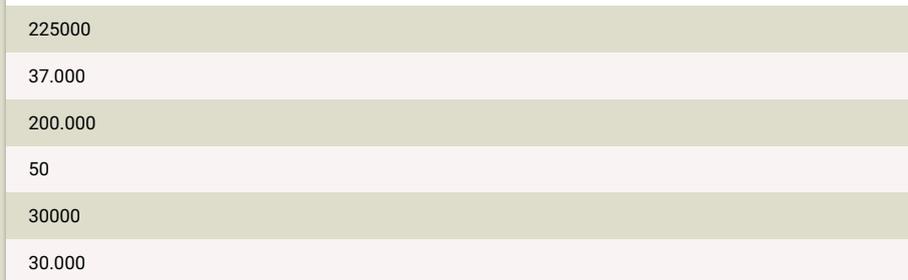
How many square meters did you build?

6 responses



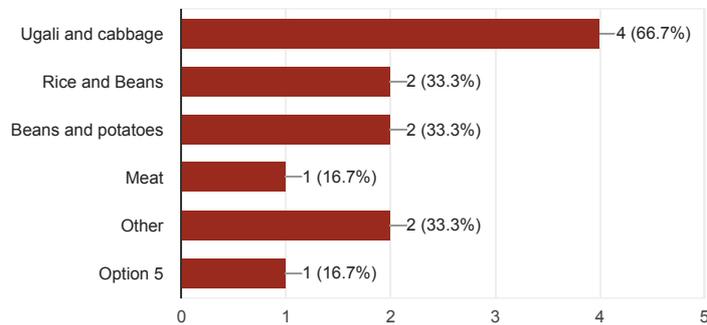
How much did the house cost?

6 responses



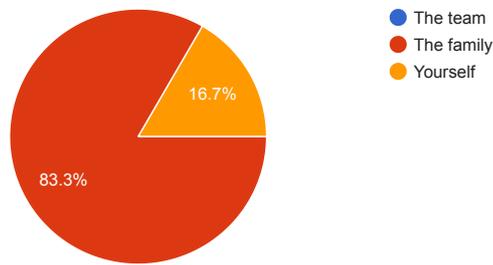
What was your main diet at lunch time?

6 responses



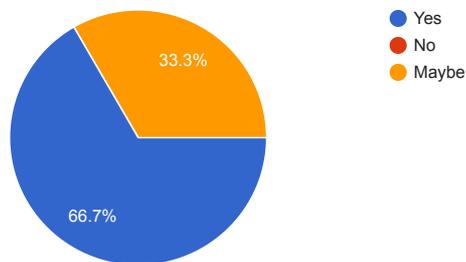
Who mainly paid for your food during lunch?

6 responses



Do you think this is appropriate?

6 responses



Why do you think so?

6 responses

The family wants to pay to show hospitality to the people, but this will be a considerable amount of money accumulating over time.

because we didnt got expensive lunch it didnt matter. we got ugali and sukuma and that really didnt make a dent in the budget. if you would get meat everyday its a different story

This is their way of showing gratitude

all the volunteers which will help to build the house should have the food covered. If not from the family (in case there are no financial capacities) the rural housing studio should cover it.

Kenyan hospitality culture in small projects that i have taken part in - you are either paying your workers or you are providing them with water and something to eat.

For me it was a different situation. During the time with Cleophas his family i got sick quite a lot so Bea suggested me to bring my own food. For the other guys they would get no lunch at all or lunch at 3. If they got lunch it was ugali with sukumawiki.

How much would the lunch cost on average each day per person?

6 responses

10ksh?

30 ksh (not really a clue, the ugali was really cheap but i dont know how much sukuma costs) maybe it's even less or more, i dont know

15 shillings (?)

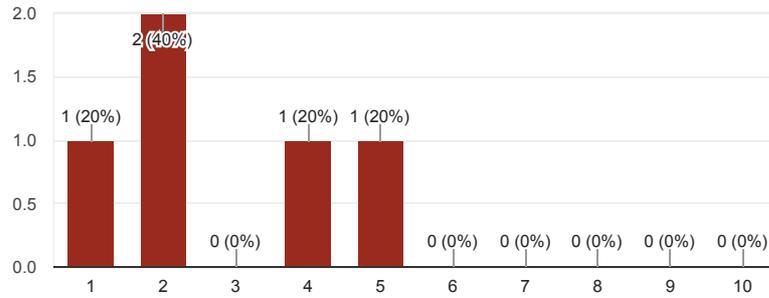
20-3-

Ksh. 25

?

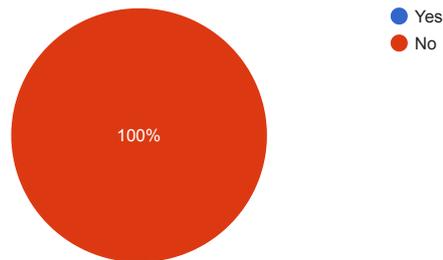
To what extent did this influence the project's budget?

5 responses



Did you manage to finish the house within the time frame of the project?

6 responses



If no: What is left to be done?

6 responses

The roofing, finishing.(They know these things)

roof with roof construction, ring beam, renovation of the whole old house (foundation, brick making, building the walls, building the inner walls)

The roof and finishing

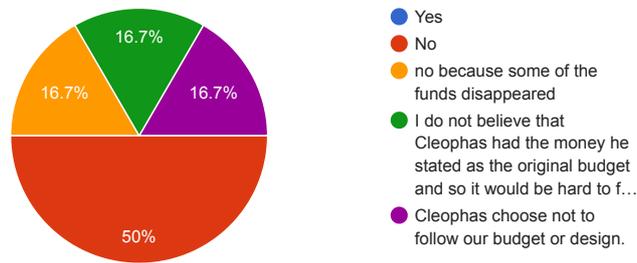
The roof

Almost everything

Walls, Roof, Finishing

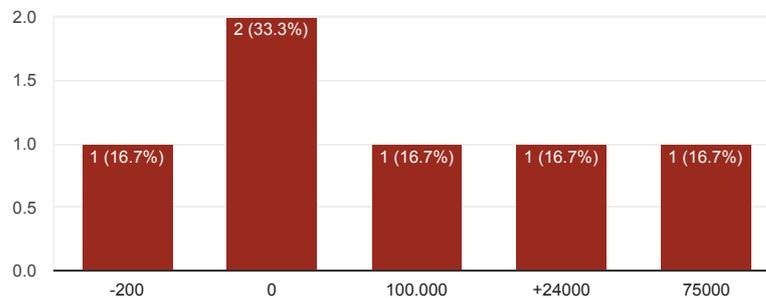
Did you finish the house within the original budget (saving/available funds)?

6 responses



How much did you go over or under budget?

6 responses



Please explain why

6 responses

One huge part went to labour, the support was pushing to get free labourers. because of this fact we did not calculate labour and then we went over budget.

The biggest influence was the addition of extra concrete, cement and hub iron. these were all decisions made by the father and the fundis, our expertise and design choices were neglected here.

didn't go over yet but it also not finished. and the rest of the budget is gone. where now around 12.000 and we had 30.000 till 40.000. so the whole roof is over budget?? and the roof is around 24000 maybe less

the desired size of the house and the necessary materials needed for the house were very different. By sizing down the house during the design phase we came to a price of 145.000 shillings for the main building (the building we were planning to built in this period). They agreed on the price of the house and did not want to shrink it done any further.

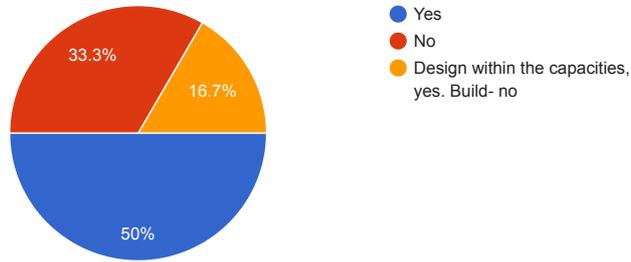
We realized that the family does not have the capacities they want to have to build the house so we tried to find the cheapest ways to build the whole house. We could manage to build with all free materials for foundation and the walls by saving all the money for the roof.

N/A

Cleophas decide to pick the stone house, so it is going to cost him over 500.000KSH

Did you design & build the house within the capacities of the family?

6 responses



Please explain why

6 responses

Our family was still able to afford, because they were stupid rich compared to other people.

because we cant finish the roof it is out of the capacities. but when we designed it it was still inside the capacities because it's really cheap. only the roof costs 'alot' timber ironsheets and the funds disappeared. So we designed it within but than everything changed so no

capacities appear to be very dynamic and are difficult to estimate before you actually start building. In other words the capacities are relative.

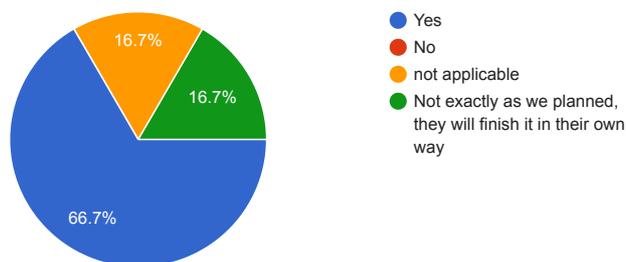
We went even under but seemed that on the way to the building the family might struggle to have the minimum amount available.

Talks with Evelyne, the wife and from observations of assets that cleophas had, he probably had the capacity he stated in the interview. However, by the time of building, he probably wasn't well prepared to provide the continuous flow of resources required to finish the house. His behaviour of trying to micromanage the labourers also cost the project dearly, as we never had a constant supply of labourers to finish up on the work.

We were able to give him 3 options and with choosing the interlocking bricks we would give the family the opportunity to keep the house around 70 square metres like they requested.

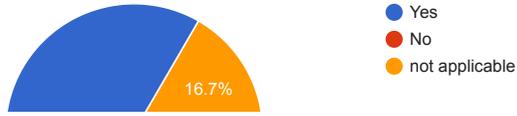
Do you think the family can finish the house without your help?

6 responses



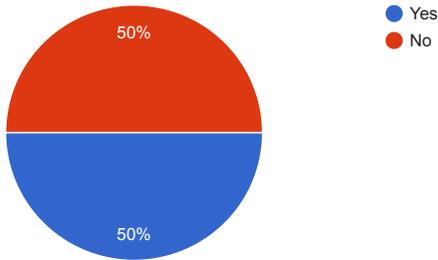
Will they need to hire labour to finish the house?

6 responses



Did you leave the project before the set time frame?

6 responses



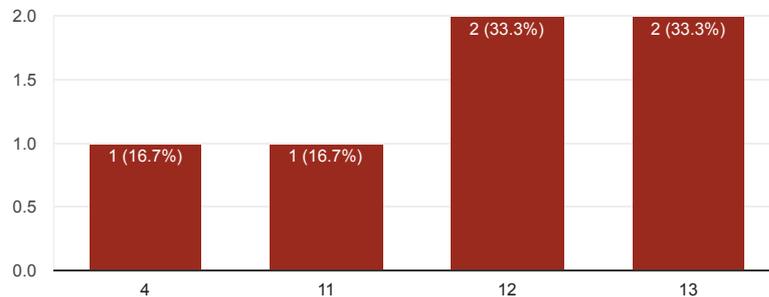
How many hours did you work on average per week during the research period?

6 responses

45
48
70
60
30
46

How many weeks did you use for the research phase?

6 responses



How many weeks could you have used for the research phase?

6 responses

I don't know

11 if everything went perfect but i think our 12 weeks where pretty close to that.

12

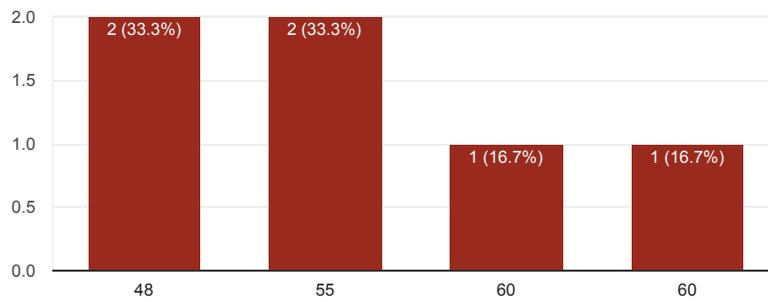
7

5 to 6

-

How many hours did you work on average per week during the building period?

6 responses



How many weeks did you use during the building phase?

6 responses

5,5

8

6

4

3

3

How many weeks could you have used for the building phase?

6 responses



After the Rural Housing Studio

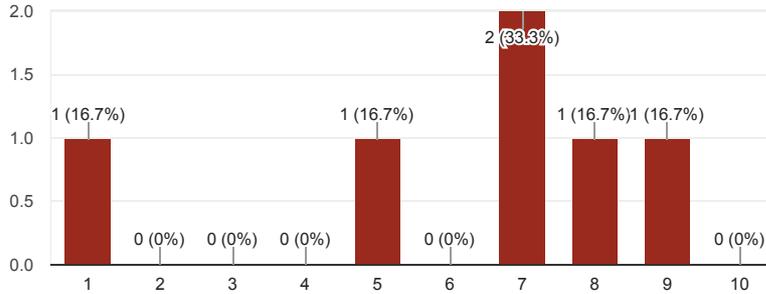
Please type in your project's success criteria

6 responses

- House, knowledge, example, Cheaper, Concept
- sustainability, knowledge transfer, local materials, cheap solutions
- realisation of possibilities
 - solutions to the price of building materials
 - creating a suitable building material
 - Improve locally known design decisions for a permanent house
 - local cultural understanding
- Building with natural materials, cheapest way of building, using all available resources, same materials -new methodologies, training a bog number of people which were involved
- 50/50,New experiences, social factors, alternative solutions
- We did not succeed

How successful was the house project?

6 responses



Did you encounter any obstacles during the project?

6 responses



- Yes
- No

If yes, what obstructed the success of the project?

6 responses

A whole plethora of things, mainly: status, difference in culture and obstruction by the family (this one sounds harsh but happened once or twice)

the lac of funds that where supposed to be there, enough people, involvement of the family, materials that where delayed, just the lac of caring about anything

The cooperation of the family. Cleophas provided a lot but not everything on the right time. Also the involvement of the family in building was less than expected. On the other hand we cannot expect of all family members to be interested in building.

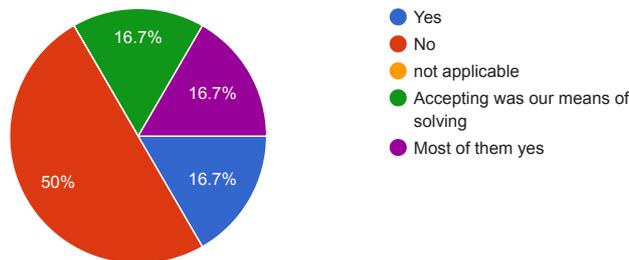
I think most of the obstacles we experienced were when we started the building phase. Ensuring all the materials, first starting will collecting the stones from the street, we had to wait for days to get the transportation. We could not find enough plastic sheets to create shades for bricks which was that time when we had to intervene and find some, because the family were not able to do it. The wood sticks when we needed to do the measurements in the field there were days passing till we got the ones we needed. The roof which ended up not being finished because of the lack of finance the family had.

Social factors beyond our control.
 On Cleophas' side, i would say,
 1. his pride- which he is entitled to, &
 2. a conflict of interests within the set out requirements and the reality on the ground. I.e Cleophas kept lamenting about the cost of labour which he was sure as per the contract, he wouldn't have to incur but due to the reality that no one showed up to help, he had to incur extra costs.
 3. poor communication and commitment by Cleophas. As his wife- evelyne was sick, he had full control of the project. he didn't deliver materials on time, he never showed up to the site to observe what was happening, he always had quarrels with the fundis in order to avoid paying them. And during the last weeks,he kept avoiding us, and we therefore had no one to communicate with.

The lack of presence and being involved.

Were you able to solve those obstacles?

6 responses



If not, Could they be solved? How? If yes: how did you solve them?

5 responses

Accept, it is their house their investment.

They are in total power of their own capacities. This could not be solved in the current created relationship through the support tool

The delays we got for most of the things we needed we could manage still to finish everything in time, but, when the situation cam to the lack of the finance we could not solve to problem. What we did was to

get focused on training the family itself on how to make the roof so even after we leave they can do it by themselves.

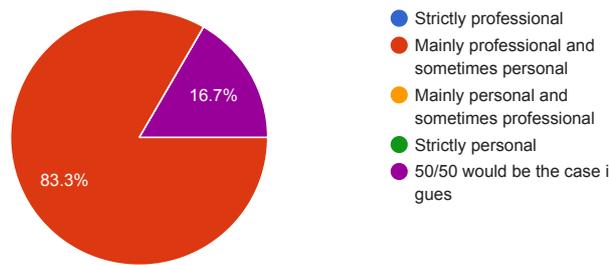
they cannot be solved. Just ensure that a thorough review is done, on individuals who are taking part in the project and their level of commitment.

Have the families deposit the monies they intend to build with, at the beginning of the project or before the building phase begins and work like contractors, where the team manages all the monies available and therefore have full control of all the factors - labour costs, material costs, delivery costs etc

We would not have been able to solve them because Cleophas was not honest to us.

How would you describe your relation with the family?

6 responses



Which things did you do/say/organise to positively establish/maintain your good relation with the family.

6 responses

Being polite gets you very far, and once the family sees that you really want the project to succeed they will respect you.

be there allot

mutual understanding

There were many things that affected to have good relation with the family. We tried to be involved in different activities they do and experience everything together. With the parents we did activities they do in everyday life like cooking together with the mother or working on the workshop with the father. Having lunch and dinners together. While with the kids we found times to play several games together, teaching them the games we used to play and we learned new games from them. We watched movies together, went together in the pool and when it came to the designing and building phase we tried our best that everyone will be happy with the results.

I respected their personal space, and we always left after the business of the day was done, or after we had a cup of tea or lunch.

With the introduction I gave presents. Also sometimes I would Jackson to translate for me to connect with the rest of the family besides Cleophas.

Which things did you do/say/organise to negatively establish/maintain establish your relation with the family.

6 responses

We have a positive relation with the family. If we did something that did not please the family then they at least did not show it. There is only one thing that I would say negatively influenced the faily, and that was nit choosing cement for the walls. We noticed that the father was getting upset with us because we did not do what he wanted, this negatively influenced the family so we decided to give in.

i have no clue

Sometimes we had to force ourselves far into their financial situation. This was sometimes uncomfortable or impossible.

Sometimes making a lot of pressure on things, materials we needed.

I do not know.

I got upset quite a lot with Cleophas, but he would just smile and aks me to forgive him.

Could you please list the problems that occurred in terms of relation, communication and events (family).

6 responses

Our father has shown up drunk once

He made a halfslab without consulting us

He posponed orders to get us to do what he wants

He pulled a piece of earth wall down to replace it with cement, as described in the situation above.

things that werent done after you make an agreement
family loosing hope
lac of involvement
lac of caring
lac of people
lac of materials
'african time' things being sooooo late
drunk workers
people that dont care for any detail
having to play cop otherwise nobody would work, people hiding etc.
having a plot without shade

- wanting to plan things which seems to be impossible
- digging into their financial situation

Not getting all the materials in time was the major problem, since we were going slower with the plan after that, the father not being interested to learn construction part was also a major issue in the first weeks.

Relationwise - none

Events. - getting Cleophas to communicate with Anthony about the cost of the bricks, when both of them were stubborn individuals. but at the end we realized that even after getting the best cost for the bricks, Ksh 12.50, Cleophas still wasn't willing to pay, and went with the Ksh.19 blocks and so the deal for interlocking blocks was over.

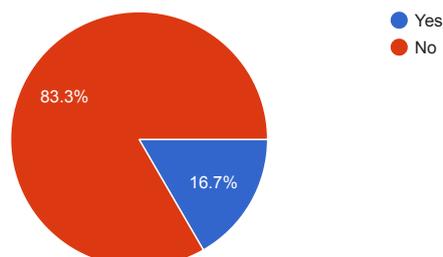
Communication. - Cleophas was always in Uganda, and avoiding us. Never showing up in the morning to start off the day with us. He couldn't get any of his sons to help us out at the field so that he could pursue other agendas. so we never had a family member to solve any issues that arose.

Personality traits. - He always wants to get value for work without pay. He made 3 fundis stop working with us, because he didn't pay 2 and the last one had to beg for his money.

Language barrier, lack of presence, illness of wife

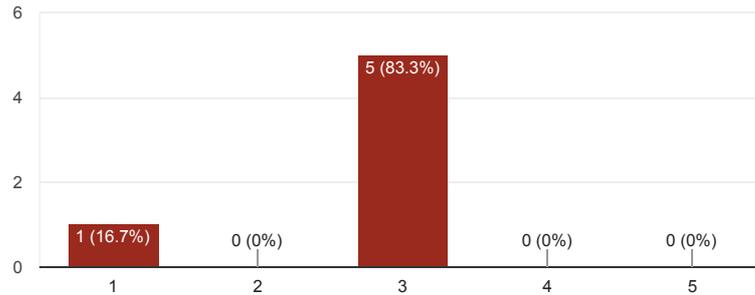
Do you believe that consuming alcohol in the presence of the family or the community have influenced these problems?

6 responses



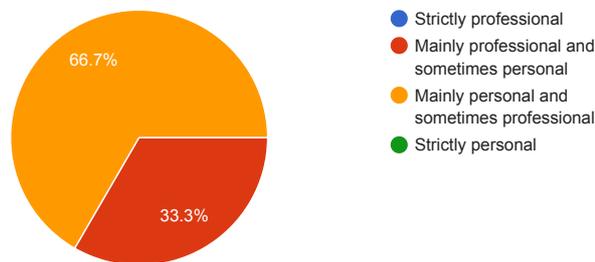
Considering the introduction and first chapter of the support what do you think about drinking alcohol in the community?

6 responses



How would you describe your relation with the community?

6 responses



Which things did you do/say/organise to positively establish/maintain your relation with the community?

6 responses

Treating people as equal and respecting their opinion. And we took our unskilled labourers to drink beers on Saturdays.

being a nice guy

- creating the bricks outside of the compound in public space
- drink a beer with the building team on Saturday after work

There were almost the same as with the family. We tried to welcome them to join us. We also played Swahili music all the time which we all found attractive on working, singing and sometimes dancing all together. playing games from time to time and making all the training process fun.

Maintain minimal social interactions.

Being nice when greeting them, try to learn Swahili and remember them.

Which things did you do/say/organise to negatively establish/maintain establish your relation with the community?

6 responses

Almost nothing, that I can remember.

-

none

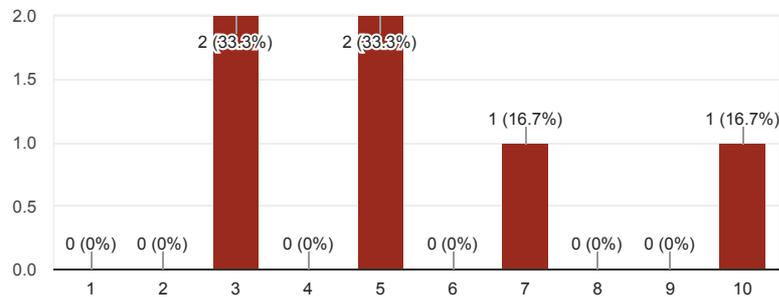
If someone from the community were consuming alcohol I did not allowed him to work and stay in the field with us. This affected to that person for a day but after that we got even closer since they could understand the reason.

I do not know.

When I was not in the mood for all the hectic I would ignore.

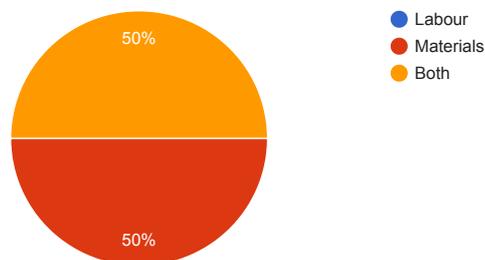
How much does the new house depend on financial resources to maintain?

6 responses



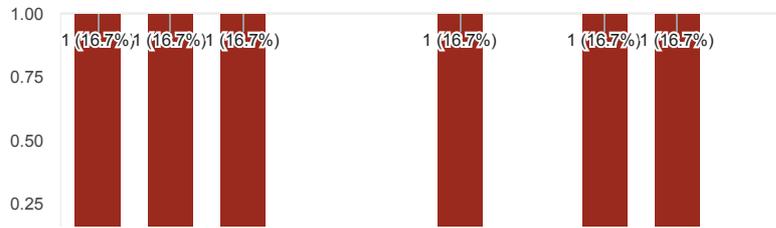
Are those costs mainly on labour or materials?

6 responses



Does the family have the knowledge to maintain, extend or replicate the house without 'external' (your) help?

6 responses



Please explain why you believe so

6 responses

Because they did not help during the building phase, they hired all the hands we needed.

on one way they know on the other way they dont care about details so i dont know. if they are tired they will fuck up. also they dont know how to make the roof, or yes they know the knowledge is there but i dont think musa will try on his self and just hire a fundi.

They were not much involved in the building phase

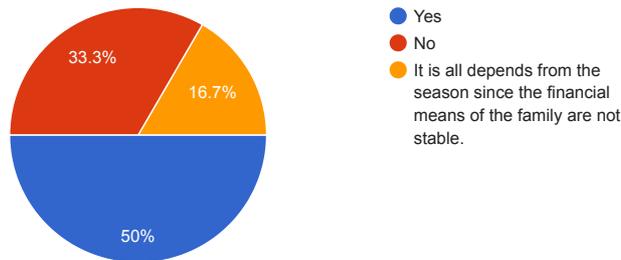
If we consider the family also the brothers of the father of the house than they have all the capacities to maintain, extend or replicate the house. If we talk only about the closer family I think they are able to maintain but not the extend or replicate without the need of the brothers or community.

It's a stone house. There are available fundis in the community who can carry out any maintenance issues that may arise.

Cleophas decided to continue without us. He failed on us.

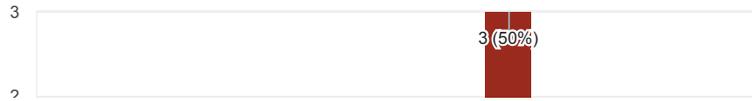
If the family is not able to maintain, extend or replicate the house do they have the financial means to hire labour and buy the necessary materials?

6 responses



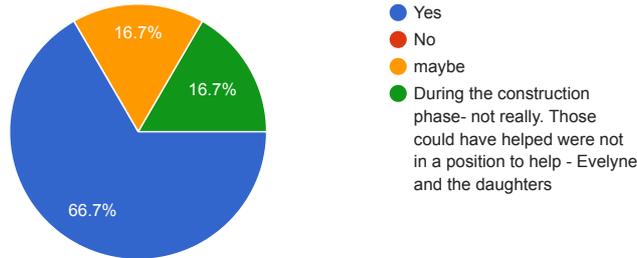
To what extent do you think the family relies on their community to maintain, extend or replicate the house without 'external' (your) help?

6 responses



According to you, could the family as a whole have been more involved in realizing the house?

6 responses



If yes: could you explain who, why & how?

5 responses

If they all really had to work then no. but if they did not want to help and used work as an excuse then yes, ofcourse. But you cannot say when they are lying or not.

musa, wife, and daughters didnt really help. also the other family only helped when you asked and not spontaneous

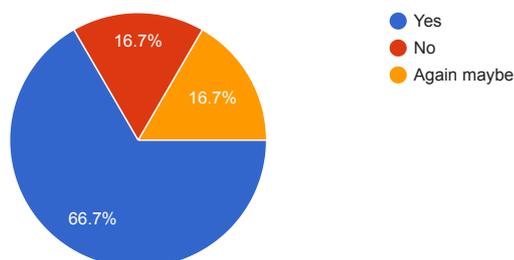
All of them could have spend more time with us in building phases. Although a big part of the family is busy with harvasting and are needed here to create the financial needs for the house and for food of the family.

The father might have been much more involved even that he had to work and get the financial means to buy food for the family.

The first wive told the three boys children not to help with building. Unfortunately because they could have helped us a lot.

According to you, could the community as a whole have been more involved in realizing the house?

6 responses



If yes: could you explain who, why & how?

5 responses

People bring up all kinds of social or financial excuses, and at this point i'm not sure what to believe anymore.

some people couldnt be there everyday because they didnt care or werent able to sustain themselves

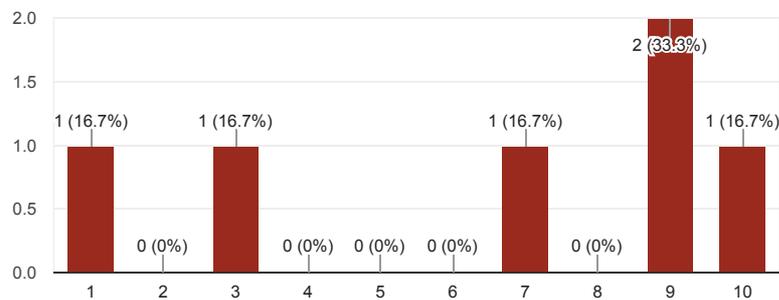
by living to their promises and taking part in the creation of the adobe bricks.

We had a lot of community members interested to learn and involved in all the building phases. I believe that most of them are capable to apply the techniques they have learned by themselves.

People with no work, however mainly they asked for money.

How much does the new house depend on building knowledge you offered to the family?

6 responses



Could you please explain what & why?

6 responses

We left out a lot of nonsense which they would never do, and we provided them with new designing options. And we provided them with very strong adobe bricks.

we came up with a new way of making the (foundation, floor, walls) only the roof is normal.

In order to maintain it and extend it they should understand the way of building and finishing. But we did not reach the phase of finishing

Making the adobe bricks, the whole process starting from the mixture to the drying process was new to them.

Measuring and levelizing the building area

The foundation, using stones from the street-natural stones was a new method n the area

Walls, starting from the thickenes of the wall, to the shape and connection of the bricks which all had a reason after it was all new for them too.

The importance of working together and helping each other as a community

The plan of the house.

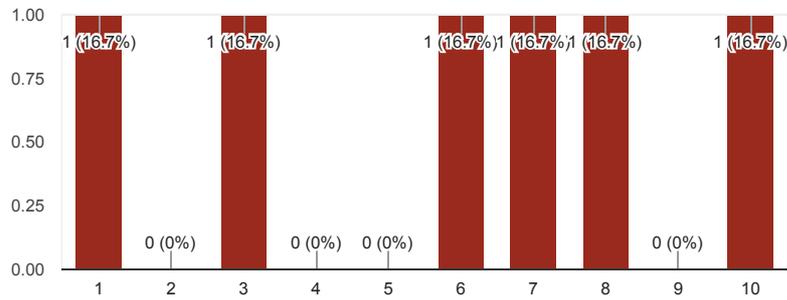
Even after offering technical advice on the sound construction of stone houses, the family still chose the traditional conventional ways they are used to.

Cleophas decided to move on without us. He failed us.

How much does the new house depend on local building

knowledge/fundi's offered to the family?

6 responses



Could you please explain why?

6 responses

The fundis are the only one that know how to do masonry, and for design options there is not much. We think that many of the things they apply are useless.

we didnt have fundi's and we come up with our own things. most fundi's here are not really capable of anything

We tried to keep our sollutions close to local know-how about building. They are able to finish the house with fundi's from the phase where we left it, because the creation of the roof is locally found. But the finishing of the wall might cause problems in the future.

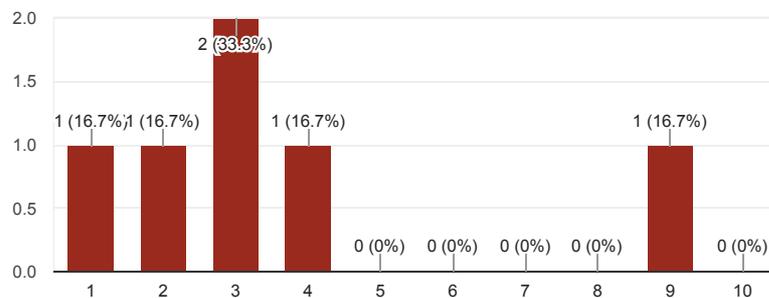
The whole house is build in a new method which it was not used before. By that it means that the community we trained are the best fundis the family could get.

Just a typical stone house, that is usually done to cut costs in rural building

Cleophas decided to build a stone house, however he can't do it himself.

To what extent were you able to transfer the building knowledge to the family?

6 responses



If you did, which skills did you teach the family?

5 responses

We taught Brenda how to measure, before she was not able to work anymore.

Cleophas might be able to do brick making, but that is not known because he watched and did not work.

the family got some information about everything. but didnt really help. the most knowledge is transferred to the second circle in the family and the community.

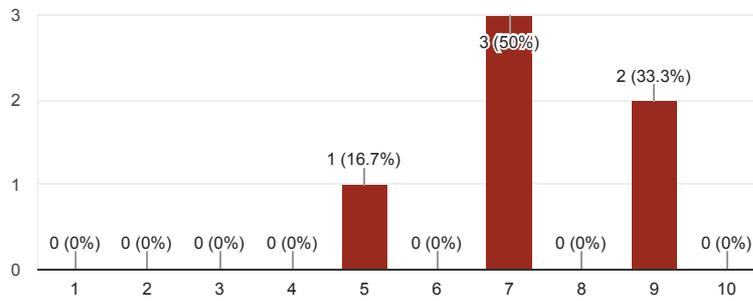
Reading drawing and creating adobe bricks

Musa- managing, measuring the foundation
Everlyne- mixing the soil, making bricks, measuring, building the foundation, building the walls, window, chimney,
Collins- measuring the foundation and walls, building the walls and window

Using 3,4,5 triangle for making straight lines.

To what extent were you able to transfer the building knowledge to the community?

6 responses



If you did, which skills did you teach the community members?

6 responses

A lot, from measuring to brick making to masonry. Every step there was a paid or unpaid community member.

making foundation, bricks, walls, floor

creating adobe bricks

Joseph- all the phases of the building, measuring, mixing, making adobe bricks, walls, window, floor, foundation, chimney, bathroom, door, roof, testing the soil.

Sande- mixing, foundation, making adobe bricks, walls, window, floor, chimney, bathroom

Anton- all the phases of the building, measuring, mixing, making adobe bricks, walls, window, floor, foundation, chimney, bathroom, door, roof, testing the soil.

Carioke- mixing, making bricks, measuring

Joel- mixing, making adobe bricks, walls, window, floor, chimney, bathroom

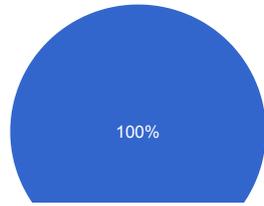
Bernard- mixing, foundation, making adobe bricks, walls, window, floor, chimney, bathroom

Titus, David, Robert 1 and Robert 2 - pegging, locating, setting out, marking and concrete ratio mixing, Block making.

Straight lines, setting out building, leveling with water hose, mixing concrete, interlocking bricks.

Did you learn any building skills yourself?

6 responses



● Yes
● No

If yes: Which and from who(m)?

6 responses

Masonry, from corne.
(local) landmeasuring, from a fundi
Brick making, trial and error
Foundation work, unskilled labourers

working with jembe's, talimbo's, mixing soil with your feed

mostly creating adobe bricks through research. Also measuring the foundation is learned locally because of the lack of materials and tools. I learned much about local sollutions on measuring and locating

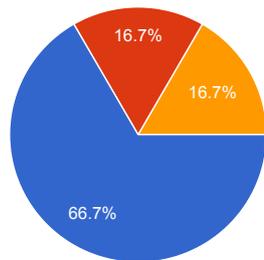
I did never tried to mix the soil before with u feet which I tried it there. Working with some of the tools like leveling hose was new for me too.

Traditional building - from a neighbour

Leveling, mixing concrete, interlocking bricks

Do you believe that the knowledge transfer to the inhabitants had a positive impact on the their self-reliance?

6 responses



● Yes
● No
● No answer

If yes: Could you explain why?

5 responses

We could have tought them how to build, but the family would still choose to pay people and therefore would not use their new skills.

without the knowledge transfer they could never be self reliant, right?

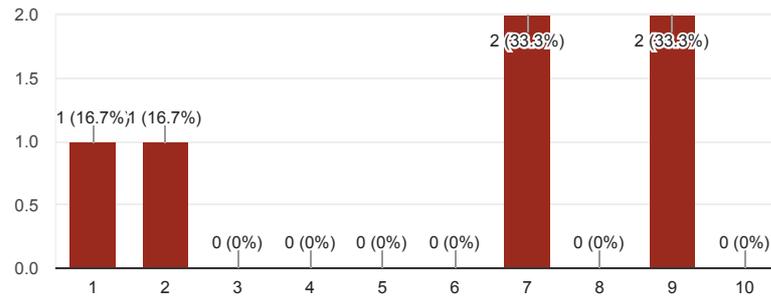
Some of them are able to reproduce our adobe bricks

They can build much better houses within the same capacities in the future

no answer

What impact do you believe that the decisions made based on inhabitant capacities had on the family's self-reliance?

6 responses



Could you explain why?

6 responses

When you know the capacities the family has you will work to that number. Then it will automatically be within or close to their capacities, if what they say they have is true.

if we made something that was too expensive they weren't able to maintain it.

we were unable to map their capacities

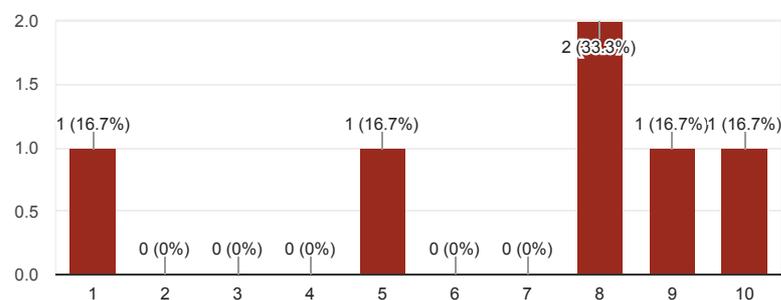
We tried our best on teaching the easiest, smartest and cheapest way to build.

Typical stone house- no skills can be transferred unless to funds and workers working on the project

In the end we only build a design decided on the finances, because Cleophas had something in mind and that was what it was going to be.

To what extent does the realized house fit the family's capacities?

6 responses



Why does/doesn't the realized house fit the family's capacities?

6 responses

Because the family has had a very good harvest we suspect.

yes same story again it was inside the budget but the budget is lower than expected.

we did not have many problem with Cleophas providing the materials needed. Therefor I think he is able to go on in the same pace in order to finish the house

We did an extension, which it means the family will be able to use the existing and the new house and by that it means that everybody will have a sleeping room, an inside bathroom, an inside kitchen with chimney and all necessary tools and a much bigger living room where they can all spent their evening together.

Available resources are enough to finish a decent house, If cleophas was to dedicate them to the project

Cleophas choose stone over finance.

Which decisions or solutions caused the realized house to fit/not fit the family's capacities? Please explain why.

6 responses

We designed the entire house to be as cheap as possible, by losing the amount of cement. Then we almost reached the budged by decreasing size until the family ordered us to stop decreasing and just start building. Then we would go over the budget that the family has given us, but we thing that that number is way bigger then thay said.

ironsheets, but they didnt want something else.

talking about the general design through a model made them understand how the design was going to be built and with what materials. Because of the use of local materials they were able to estimate the cost themselves as well.

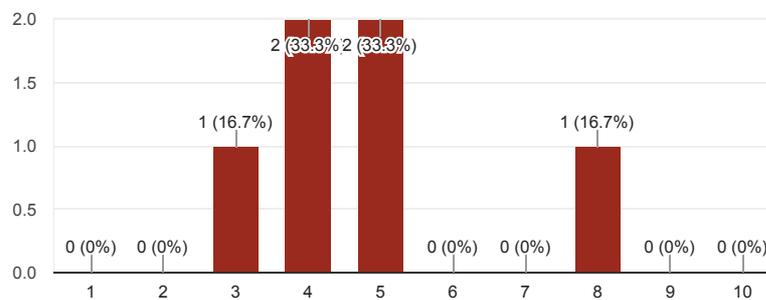
not demolishing the existing house but just repairing it. Build the cheapest ways possible and create enough space for all their needs.

Available resources are enough to finish a decent house, If cleophas was to dedicate them to the project

Cleophas decide to fail on us.

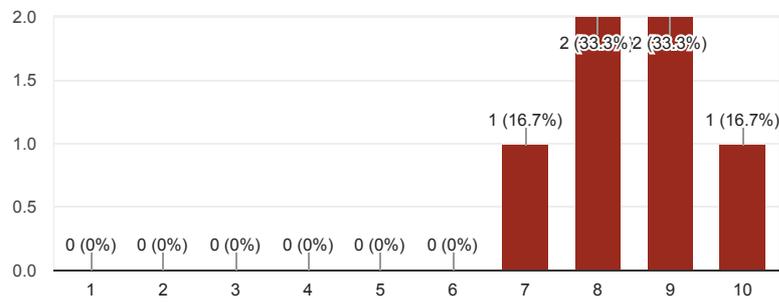
To what extent would you normally have considered inhabitant self-reliance as a success criterion?

6 responses



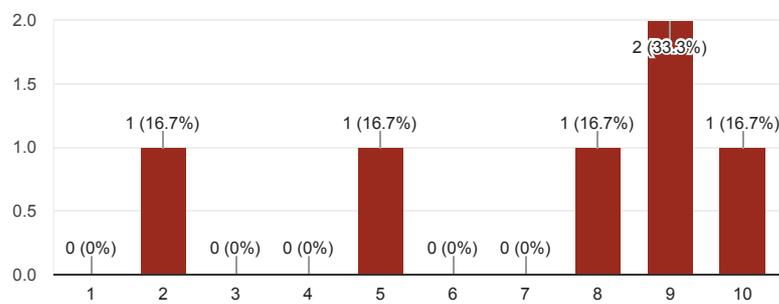
How important do you think inhabitant self-reliance is as a success criterion in a project such as rural housing studio?

6 responses



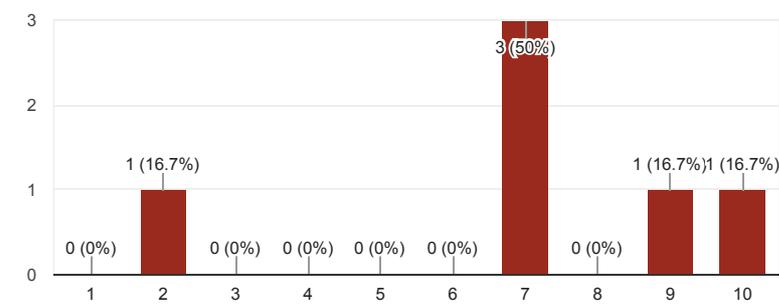
To what extent would you normally have considered inhabitant capacities as a success criterion?

6 responses



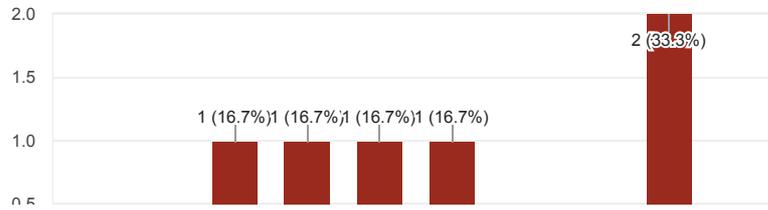
How important is according to you inhabitant capacities as a success criterion in a project such as rural housing studio?

6 responses



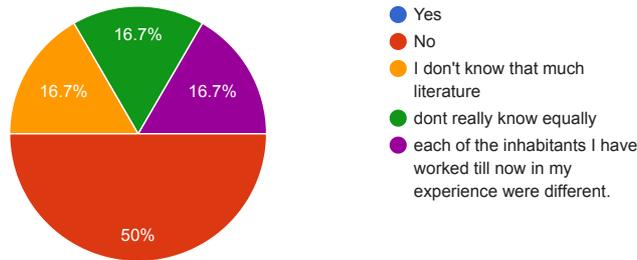
Do you think in your education you have sufficiently learned how to evaluate inhabitant capacities in relation to their habitation?

6 responses



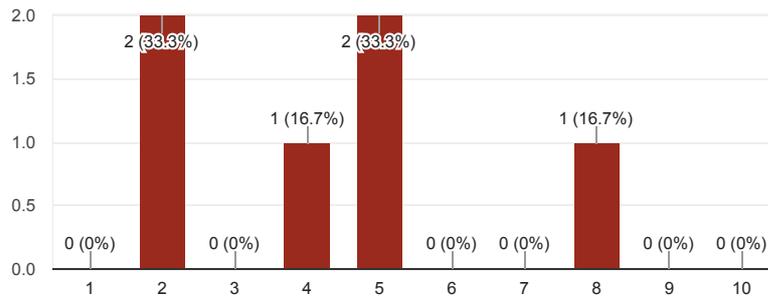
Do you think there is applicable literature available how to practically evaluate inhabitant capacities in this type of context?

6 responses



Do you think in your education you have sufficiently learned how to evaluate inhabitant self-reliance in relation to their habitation?

6 responses



Could you please explain why?

6 responses

We had no classes on self reliance, but we learned to research about a lot of things. This made it easy-ish for me to adapt to this project.

we didnt really think about self reliance

to evaluate their self-reliance we were able to tally follow the support tool.

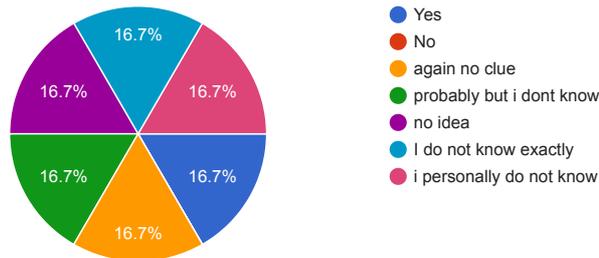
Not at school very much but mostly in working experiences and my will to learn.

Courses i have taken in building Economics, Architectural Management and Cost planning and control might have prepared me in making decisions related to capacities and self-reliance, especially maintenance. However, no preparation can prepare you for the hard hitting realities that we face dealing with actual clients.

Avans does not give courses about self-reliance or even habitation.

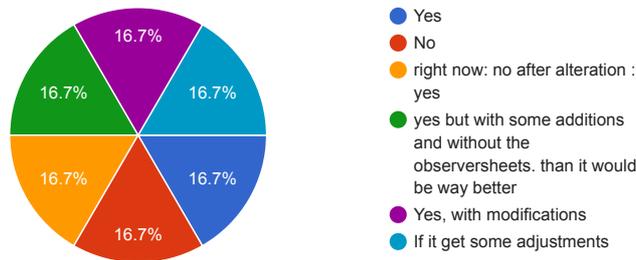
Do you think there is applicable literature available how to evaluate inhabitant self-reliance in this type of context?

6 responses



Would you recommend the support to others working in similar context?

6 responses



Why/why not?

6 responses

Because now it has a lot of flaws, but it is not done yet. It will most likely change a lot in the future so maybe then I would recommend it.

yes but with some additions and without the observer sheets. than it would be way better. These things werent that nice to do and some things just could be left out or better

It is not finished. But I would like professionals to follow this path the support tool sketches.

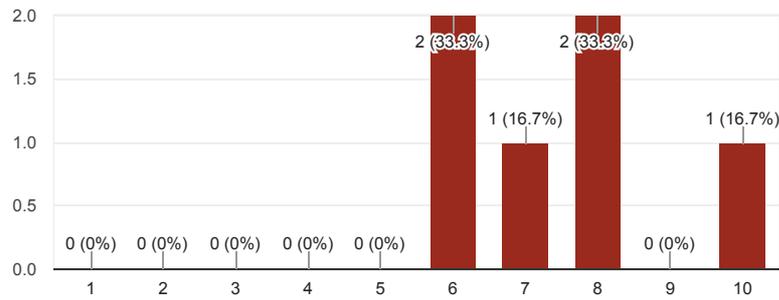
Yes, it has some really good points to follow by

With Modifications, yes

Mostly the final chapters could help architects/engineers on working in rural dwelling environments.

How important do you think the team setup (architect/student) has been to the success of the project?

6 responses



What did you value most in working in this team setup?

6 responses

Being close to an architect has made me learn a lot, and made me more in charge of some aspect.

being able to discuss things thing together and brainstorm.

Only argjire could be difficult to work with if you didnt know she could have mood swings. In the beginning this caused allot of problems but after adapting she is a really nice smart person.

Someone to discuss design and construction sollutions

We both had our strong and weak points so by understanding these we could work together really good

There are certain traits that each individual brings to the table. Therefore a good balance can be found by pairing individuals even teams of three can work.

For me the teamwork collaboration was a challenge. First of all I came in later and Jackson already had some trouble to deal with. However he would gave me the opportunity to grow in my chosen competences.

What did you value least in working in this team setup?

6 responses

Not much really, the only domper for me was the actor/observer roles.

in the beginning the problem of moodswings

The lack of experience in a team that is sharing knowledge about building.

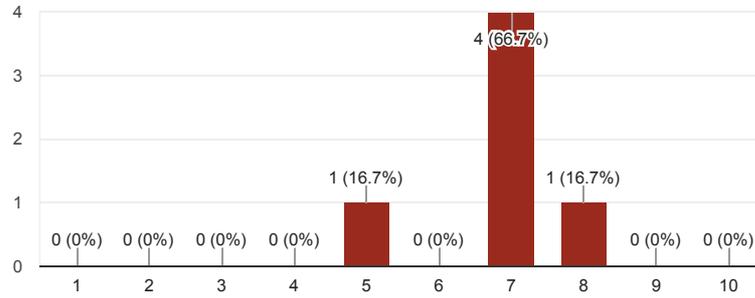
the role which was told to be the same for the student and the architect it was an issue in the beginning in decision making or sharing knowledge.

nothing yet

I can say I am not totally happy with the outcome of our collaboration. I know it was quite a challenge for us because I have been sick a lot. However it was really hard for me to feel included because Jackson was talking Swahili a lot. Every time I would say something about it, he would just laugh it away or translate. However the next day it would all start again. Also he is not really a talker, so or we do it him way or my way but there is no room for discussion. I think if he would try to discuss issues with me we would have sorted out so many more things.

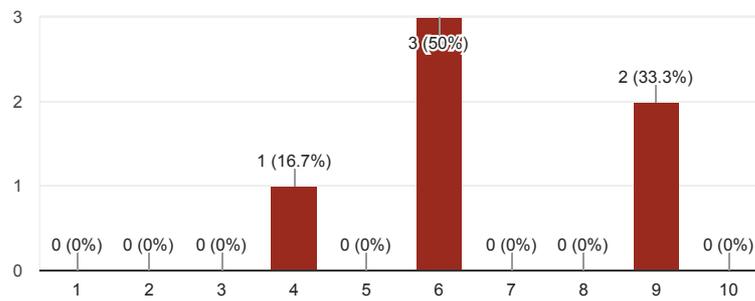
Have you been receiving feedback form your team member in the field?

6 responses



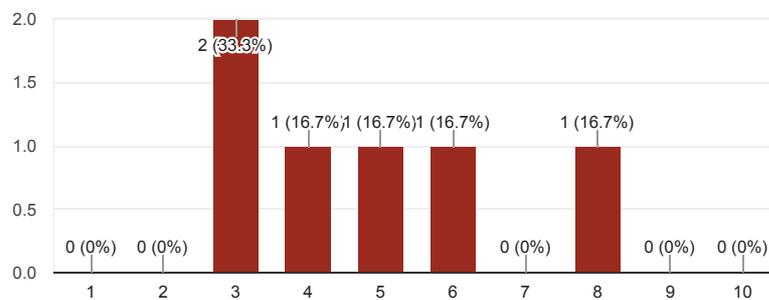
Have you been giving feedback to your team member in the field?

6 responses



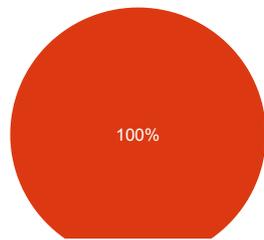
How important were the feedback moments in the field (actor/observer)?

6 responses



Would you say that this is a common/uncommon way to organise a building team in an actor/observer role in a project?

6 responses



- Common
- Uncommon

Please explain why?

6 responses

Normally there will be not this level of "equality" between architect and student. My opinion matters, maybe not as much as that of the architect but still.

never heard of it

especially during the building process you're both acting. But this was almost all the time the case.

I did never experienced before

I feel that the actor observer role, takes out a lot of participation from the observer each day in the field.

With our team the actor observer role did not work out. If i would fill in a sheet jackson would always add things. For example: the soil test there was a moment a fungi was getting a longer jembe because the jembe we had was to short. I did not notice, i just noticed we got a second jembe by seeing it come in. If they would have spoken English i would have understand the reason why.

What were your main activities/responsibilities during the project (list by priority, think of: administration, design, inventory, data coding, etc.)

6 responses

General work, support work, coding.

processing all the data and working with the equipment i did all on my own. with the design we worked together only argjire was responsible for the digital drawings, only the sketches and brainstorm sessions we did together. also i worked mostly with all the excel sheets. and calculations and chapter 10 i did.

- Designing
- Engineering
- Building
- Planning
- Administration
- Data coding

the role of the support tool was all planned as we had, being actor and observer, designing process, finding solutions on all phases of the building process drawings, finding/choosing all the materials to be used, teaching or training people, administration, managing the team and the community

Design, Communication with the family, leading implementation.

Administration, data coding, calculation, planning

What were the main activities/responsibilities of your team member during the project (list by priority, think of: administration, design, inventory, data coding, etc.)

6 responses

General work, support work, coding.

making the digital design managing the builders

- calculations
- research engineering solutions
- Data coding
- Administration

being actor and observer,
teaching or training people,
data coding,

Administration, data collection and organisation, project management.

Design, leader, communication

If you could make a change to the team composition, what would you change?

6 responses

nothing really

i wouldnt really change anything but im still curious how it would be what would happend if we had two students

I would add more experienced professionals

1 more local student might have been a help to get different information faster maybe.

size of the team - 3 members
Expertise of the student- more towards design and engineering.
Expertise of the Professional - more experience in construction
Degree- Architecture/Engineering.

I think the team composition is okay, the problem with our team was the language barrier in the field and our cultural backgrounds/karakters.

Your personal feedback

Open

5 responses

question: "Did you enjoy the questionnaire?"

no

the importance of the culture in designing the house

questionnaire- too long. if it has to be this long, then it can have save options so it can be done over a couple of days.

The excel sheets in the support tool should be made easier. There is a lot information in one sheet and for us it was a pain in the ass figuring it out.

Thank you for your taking your time to fill in the evaluation of the rural housing studio! We will keep you posted as soon as all the

result have come in!

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google. [Report Abuse](#) - [Terms of Service](#) - [Additional Terms](#)

Google Forms