

# GHANA WORKSHOP 2011

## PROBLEM ADDRESSED



Ghana is experiencing a housing crisis as outlined in the recent UN-Habitat housing profile. Like many rapidly developing countries, people in Ghana are increasingly turning their back on local construction, in favor of western principles perceived as the vision for a modern globalised society. Current

building practice is moving towards an increasingly standardised format using expensive and imported materials often with a lack of appropriate construction skills. These trends pose social, economic and environmental challenges towards the development of the built environment. The workshop delved into the causes and effects of this and reflected on the ways in which needs could be met in sustainable and locally relevant ways creating livelihoods and better environments. A range of alternative forms of practice based around a synthesis of local and global solutions were developed around these issues.

## GOAL ACHIEVED

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



Date: September 2011  
Location: Accra, Ghana  
ASF Team: Ben Powell, Sophie Morley & Anthony Powis  
Partners: VPWA, Sabre Charitable Trust & UN-Habitat  
Donors: Self-funded by participants, UN-Habitat funded symposium  
Project type: International Workshop

## METHODOLOGY OF WORK



The workshop was structured in two parts with the first week aimed at providing opportunities for participants to gain an understanding of the context and to explore (through research and participatory methodologies) some of the complexities surrounding sustainable development. The second week was then focused on responding to this through developing propositions that utilized local and global skills, resources and desires. One of the outcomes of the activities was a small building to be used as a seed bank for a local farming initiative and which drew on and tested many of the ideas that arose during the workshop.

## FUTURE PERSPECTIVE



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