Layered Elements—Reclaiming World-wide, Waste-based and Passive Technologies to Fight Malaria

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In 2012, Architecture for Health In Vulnerable Environments (ARCHIVE) - an organization that "works at the intersection of health and housing, using one basic right, housing, to deliver another basic need, health"; opened an international design challenge themed "Building Malaria Prevention: A Global Design Competition". The purpose was to retrofit 24 informal housing units in the community of Minkoaméyos in Yaoundé, Cameroon.

As established in the design brief, "the design of the housing units should combine the use of common sense principles and innovative ideas to minimize the transmission of malaria". The campaign sought a design that truly integrated community-lead architectural construction with health improvements under a \$300 per house budget.

Lead by an Assistant Professor, a multidisciplinary and diverse team that included professionals and students from USA, Costa Rica, Guatemala, England and Chile was formed to work on the project. Early conversations targeted at understanding and defining the problem led the team to a broad, worldwide research on passive technologies based on waste materials and natural elements found in the adjacent context.

This board explores the ideas and technologies that guided the design process and presents the final design proposal – which was chosen as a finalist project by the jury.

The project studied the health profile of the community, the relationship between

housing design and malaria, the existing site conditions, the two housing typologies to be retrofitted and the waste profile as introduced by the competition resources booklet. The project then developed three main ideas explored by the design team: 1) research of worldwide, free available technologies that re-use waste materials or that use natural and accessible resources, 2) empowering the community to be able to build the interventions by themselves and, 3) understand the actual cultural and physical solutions to the problem and include them as part of the new proposal to produce a continuity in the appropriation. Following the presentation of the ideas, a description of each of the technologies is presented and elaborated as parts within a whole, leading to the presentation of the final design as the conclusion. All-in-all the team was able to keep each intervention under \$250 dollars and it was expected to lower malaria transmission in 70% - 90%, a good goal based on how simple the solutions were.



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