

Co-design as a strategy to improve ecological awareness of communities

One strategy of communities to easily embrace ecological awareness is by involving directly in the improvement of their environmental quality. This paper discusses the case study research of the co-design process of the neighborhood regeneration project in Kampung Tongkol at the Ciliwung riverbank, Jakarta. This project is carried out collaboratively involving residents of the area and facilitated by ASF (Architecture Sans Frontières) Indonesia. The main important object of this regeneration project is the construction of a self-supporting sample house. This house aims as an ideal model which another neighborhood can replicate. Residents are directly involved in the organizing, the design process, to the construction stage. The primary purpose of regeneration is to improve the quality of the residential environment. The principles of sustainable design are employed as the main guidance from the beginning of the process. This study concludes that the final achievement of this project not only results in a higher quality environment but also raises the ecological awareness of the residents of the neighborhood.

Methods

This study employed a case study method to the co-design project of design and construction of a sample house in Kampung Tongkol, Jakarta. This project was initiated by the Urban Poor Consortium (UPC), which then collaborated with the Indonesian Architecture Sans Frontieres (ASF ID) to assist residents in managing their neighborhood.

Result and discussion

Interviews and observations on residents' daily lives lead to several reasons why this ecological awareness arose during the co-design project.

First, the co-design process that allows dialogue and intense interaction between designers and participants have encouraged residents to absorb ecological values, reflecting in actual actions such as planting around them.

The second reason is that residents have the freedom to explore their views, visions, and collective goals in the co-design process. Freedom will not be obtained if the regeneration planning is carried out using the traditional method (top-down).

Co-design allows an inclusive and non-oppressive process. The application in this project is considered appropriate because the design process involves underprivileged groups who have never had the space to be involved in managing their environment.



Figure 1. Residents began to plant their surroundings with potted plants.

Conclusion

The sample house project in Tongkol Village started from a desire to refuse eviction. Residents agreed to improve environmental conditions as a strategy to resist eviction. The application of a participatory approach through co-design carried out by ASF ID not only produces a healthy and ecological environment and housing. However, it is also able to raise ecological awareness among residents.

Co-design delivers an inclusive process. A process that allows the oppressed group to have a voice and take a role in making decisions. This inclusive process has proven to encourage the residents of Kampung Tongkol to propose an ecological agenda as one of the criteria for environmental arrangement.



Figure 2. The opening serves as natural ventilation for the interior of the sample house. One of the eco-friendly design features.



Figure 3. A resident explains the concept of space planning of the sample house.