

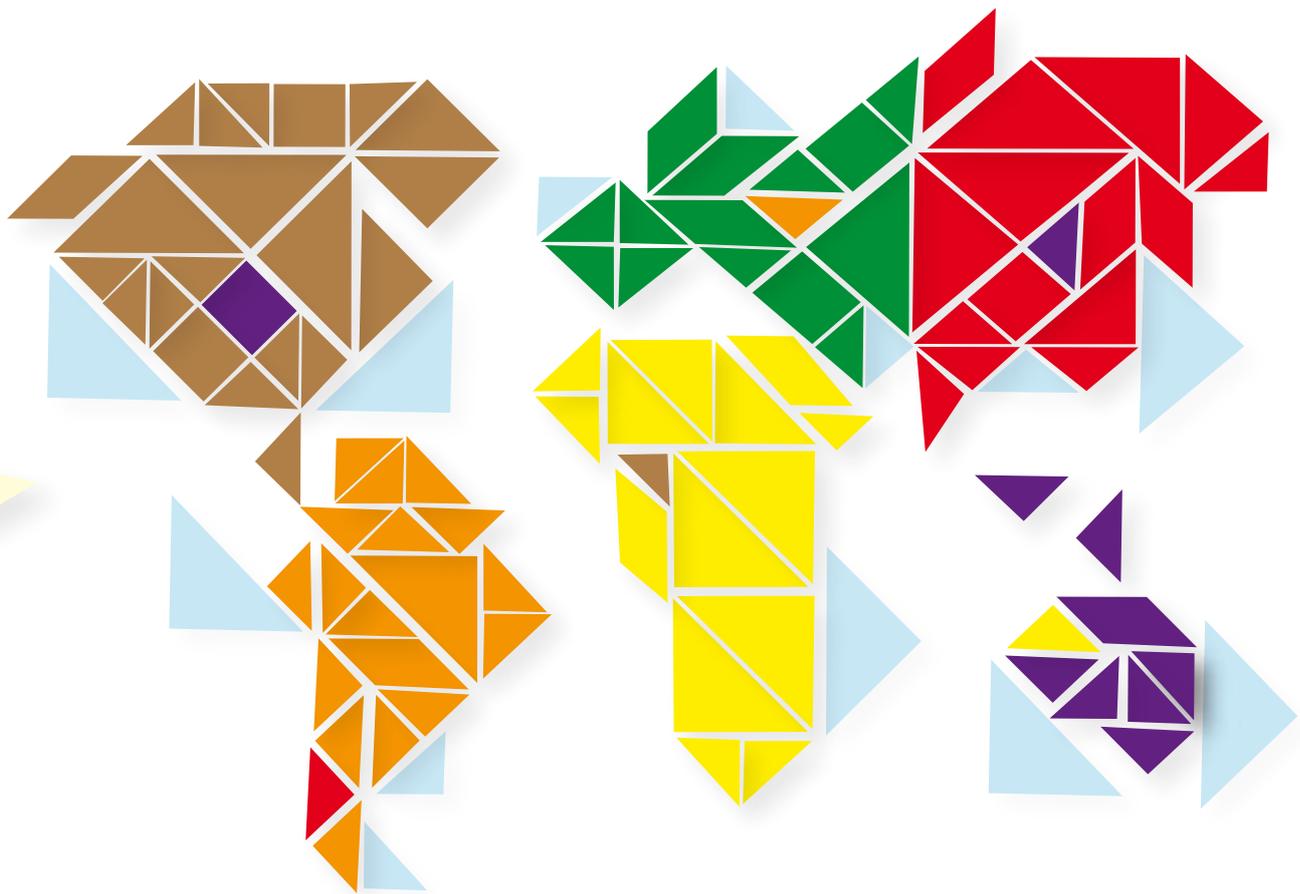
CUCS
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2013



**IMAGINING CULTURES OF COOPERATION:
UNIVERSITIES NETWORKING TO FACE THE NEW DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES**

Proceedings of the III Congress of the University Network for Development Cooperation (CUCS)

Turin, 19-21 September 2013



**POLITECNICO
DI TORINO**



**UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
DI TORINO**

Egidio Dansero, Francesca De Filippi, Emanuele Fantini, Irene Marocco (eds.)

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Egidio Dansero, Francesca De Filippi, Emanuele Fantini, Irene Marocco

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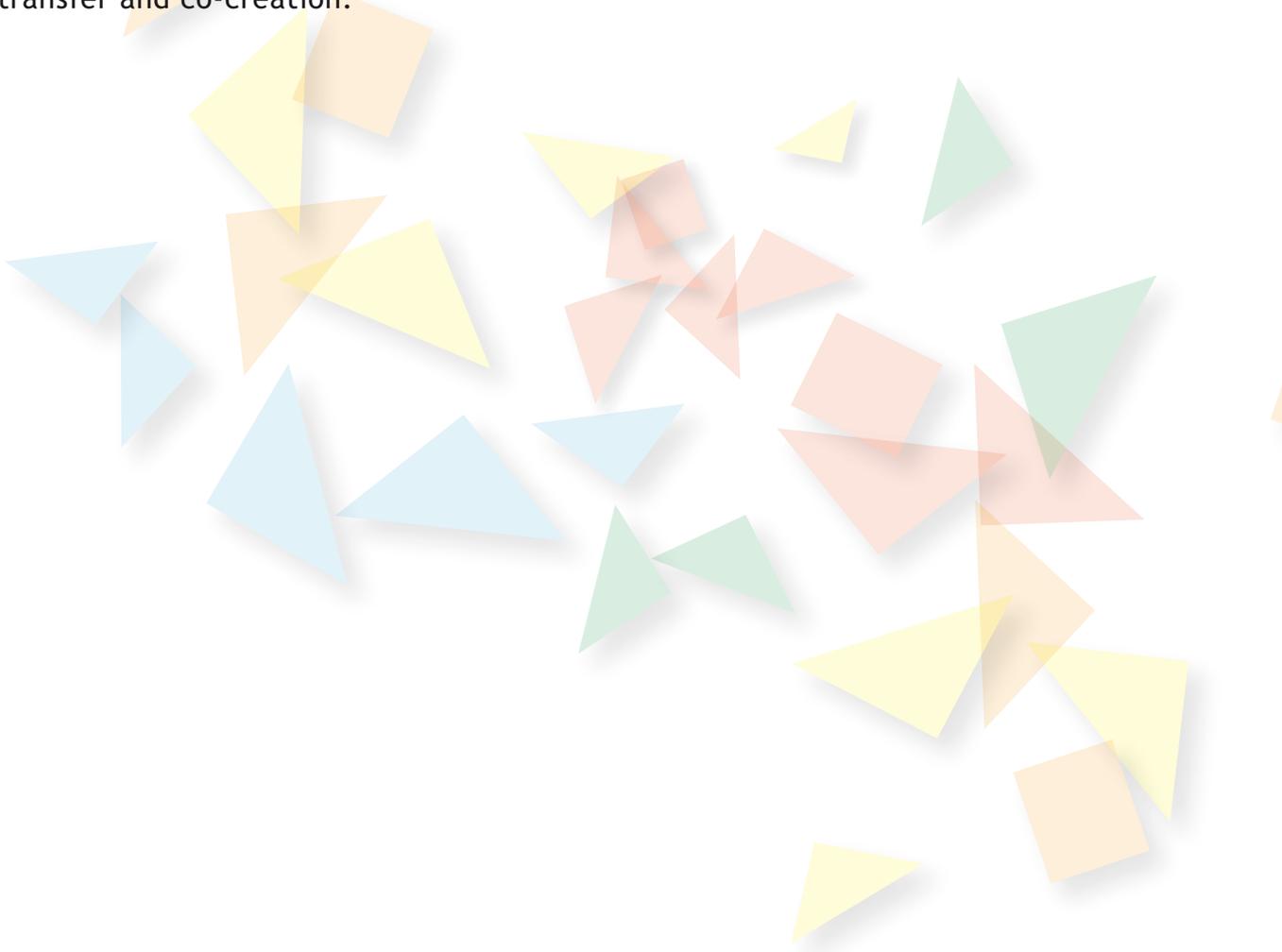


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The Italian Universities Network for Development Cooperation (CUCS) has been founded in 2007 and nowadays includes 28 Italian Universities. The III CUCS Congress (CUCSTorino2013) was held in Turin on the 19th, 20th, and 21st of September, 2013. CUCSTorino2013 was co-organised by Politecnico di Torino and University of Turin in the frame of the growing partnership between these two Universities with other relevant development cooperation actors (the UN system, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, local authorities, foundations and NGOs and their respective partners in the so called “Global South”).

The Congress, titled “Imagining cultures of cooperation: universities networking to face the new development challenges”, focused on changes occurring at different levels on current development and cooperation trends (theories, policies, practices, and the definition of the Global Development Agenda post 2015), on the role of universities as development cooperation actors and their contribution in terms of research, education & training, solutions implementation in the field, technology transfer and co-creation.



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EMERGENCY vs DEVELOPMENT. THE ARCHITECTURAL PROJECT WITHIN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Francesca De Filippi*, Alessio Battistella°

* DIST, Politecnico di Torino, Italy, francesca.defilippi@polito.it

°Arcò (Architettura e Cooperazione), a.battistella@ar-co.org

ABSTRACT

The aim of Panel was to take stock of the role that architecture holds in international cooperation. It is an environment in which construction keeps a central position, investing, every year all over the world, enormous economical resources and intensively increasing the amount of buildings; but to date it seems to not notice the difference existing between the action of building and the one of doing architecture, completely ignoring a research over the issues of sustainability, comfort and shape quality.

The panel drives to pinpoint different possible ways to overcome the categories that have always characterized the cooperation interventions: emergency, transition and development, in order to identify transversal paths in which architectural quality would established the direction to follow. To succeed in this intent, three reflection spheres were proposed to identify fragilities and opportunities that should be the starting point to renew the role of architecture within the international cooperation.

EMERGENCY VS DEVELOPMENT

The steady reduction of the economic resources invested in international cooperation during the last years had gradually faced the shift of efforts exclusively towards “emergency” contexts, neglecting an approach linked to the “development” of the interested areas.

Is it possible to reach a convergence between those two spheres?

How to do “development” with the “emergency” intervention timing?

The paper of Camillo Magni (Politecnico di Milano and Architetti Senza Frontiere, Italy) focuses on the issue of “quality” in architecture, specifically in the Humanitarian Aid field, where quality seems to be considered not essential, but rather a “surplus” if compared with more urgent needs. Most of the cooperation's projects take place in emergency situation, nevertheless in extremely poor conditions. The paper is meant to reflect on aspects influencing quality in architecture in a development cooperation scenario and on how a different design approach may affect the final result.

The paper of Elisa Salvaneschi and Marco Morandotti (University of Pavia, Italy), titled “Sustainability of post-disaster reconstruction processes: a proposal of methodology for the assessment”, presents the results of a PhD research carried out in the University of Pavia Civil Engineering and Architecture Department.

The research starts from the assumption that although both literature and the humanitarian field recognize two dimensions - emergency response and development processes – in aid interventions in the Global South, this distinction is appropriate for the first phase of post-disaster emergency, but not for the processes of reconstruction.

In the Authors' viewpoint the processes of reconstruction are the connection point between the processes of emergence and the development within the cooperation.

The paper introduces a method that could allow to evaluate the actual appropriateness, sustainability and development of the emergency response and development processes, through a comparison between indicators linked to the pre-disaster housing stock and to the reconstruction. The cross between the parameters of the housing system and those relating to the environmental, social and economic systems, makes it possible to include the interactions between external factors and the project into the process.

THE ARCHITECTURAL PROJECT IN COOPERATION, FUNDING PROSEDURES

Procedures linked to architectural projects' funding often follow unexpected practices.

Either they are financed before the fulfilment of the design phase, without knowing what is actually going to be built, or the design phase is not considered as a propaedeutic and necessary moment for the realization, acknowledging as payable only the Project Manager, who should then start building without having in hand an Executive Project.

This Panel aims to tackle and to improve the procedures heading for the acknowledgement of the *project* value as

an essential moment also in emergency contexts.

Humanitarian emergency is an area where design does not seem to play a role. The aim of the paper presented by Riccardo Vannucci (FAREstudio, Italy) is to analyse if and under which circumstances such a condition can be reversed, in the perspective of affirming appropriate shelter as a human right, and consequently design as one of the tool that can contribute to such appropriateness. The Author's viewpoint, after several experiences in the international cooperation for development, is the conviction that discipline and profession require a thorough, responsible consideration about principles and practices that counteract the current trend to reduce design, and architecture in a peculiar way, to a commodity.

The proposed strategy is therefore to get involved with radical environments such as refugee camps and to actively experience conditions and strategies for a responsible presence. The result is inevitably contradictory and stresses once again the relevance of external factors, mainly procurement strategies, over technical ones, whereas the most important contribution by the profession, and discipline, is an appropriate balance between typological and technological innovation.

APPROACHES TO THE ARCHITECTURAL PROJECT

With a great simplification effort there could be defined two main approaches to the architectural project in the international cooperation sphere:

- vernacular which aims to the recover and development of local materials and techniques with a low technological content;
- prefabricated which aims to a quick solution of the issue, delivering on the site elements already-made elsewhere.

This Panel aims to highlight the points of strength and of weakness of both those approaches through excellence practices.

The paper of Roberto Pennacchio, Roberta Nicchia et alt. (Archintorno, Italy) describes the strengths and weaknesses of the “vernacular” vs. “prefabricated” approach through the analysis of the three experiences carried out by Archintorno in Mexico in a developing cooperation framework.

Archintorno is a no-profit organization promoting development cooperation projects with indigenous communities in the Mexican State of Oaxaca since 2005. These initiatives involve academia, local authorities, CBOs and professionals (in and outside Italy) and are based on the Design-Build Studio format, that foresees the direct involvement of university students in the design and building process.

The paper argues about the impact of a building project on the local community in terms of economic, socio-cultural aspects, as well as its effects on the environment and promotes a “vernacular-oriented” approach which is, in the Authors' opinion, more consistent with the local context.