

2007 AMD OPEN ARCHITECTURE CHALLENGE | AFRICA
DESIGN BRIEF

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AFRICA

| Challenge |

Empower the youth of Mukuru Kwa Njenga, an
informal slum settlement of 250,000, to connect with
other youth and create positive change in their
community by building a technology media lab and
library.

Location: Nairobi, Kenya

| Client |



Client: Slums Information Development & Resource Centres (SIDAREC)

Client Web Site: <http://sidarecyouth.freeflux.net> (intermittent access)

Client Description: Slums Information Development & Resource Centres (SIDAREC) is a youth development project operating in the slums of Nairobi. The organization aims at tapping and consolidating skills and talents existing among the youths in the community for the common benefit of the slum dwellers. The wisdom behind this reasoning was that, a lot of untapped resources existed in the communities and if acknowledged and harnessed, would be useful in bringing the much needed positive development change under the concept "Community problems need community solutions." SIDAREC was started by a group of young people living in the slums of Nairobi in 1996 as a youth group but changed its status to a nonprofit organization in 1997.

Last updated: September 11, 2007

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Registration Begins: 09/12/2007

Submissions Due: 01/15/2008

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It is the organization's belief that the slum community has a lot of potential in terms of talents and skills and if members are empowered and mobilized to create positive change, they will eventually raise their standards of living. SIDAREC operates in the slum areas of Pumwani and Mukuru Kwa Njenga. The two slums are about 15km distance from each other and have an estimated combined population of 500,000 people. SIDAREC currently operates a successful technology center and radio station (99.9 Ghetto FM) in Pumwani and is seeking to build a similar facility in Mukuru Kwa Njenga. The proposed media lab and library will be used to teach computer skills, including web and graphic design skills; will house recording facilities for the radio station; and will offer youth a place to research, play computer games, and study.

End-users: The media lab and library will serve a staff of 7 and 250 youth

Need: Today's world prosperity is technologically driven. The world has become a global village where the issue of distance is no longer the case. People interact and do business at the click of a mouse.

Currently people living on less than a dollar a day in the slums must pay the same rates as those with means to access the internet. The high costs of accessing internet means that many people living in the slums would continue to be out of touch with the rest of the world and poverty will continue stalking them. The need for such facility is also necessitated by lack of a place where students could do their studies and research work online. The nearest place where students can gain online access is a library around is 15 km away and it is always full with many people.

Young people would like to be trained in computer skills that will allow them to compete in the job market, communicate with each other and with the world. They lack a facility where they can gain access to the Internet at rates they can afford and learn these skills.

| Program |

Competitors are challenged to design a youth media lab and library for the local NGO, SIDAREC. Located in the heart of the Mukuru Kwa Njenga, this facility will provide education training and after school programs for the community. This structure will be part of an overall complex called the SIDAREC Mukuru Kwa Njenga Resource Centre.

The proposed facility will allow SIDAREC to:

- Provide a library for youth in the area
- Allow youth free access to a computer lab for after school activities
- Provide computer training to the community at-large
- Teach graphics and web skills to youth
- Run a small radio recording studio
- Run a low-cost internet cafe
- Use the exterior space informal sports tournaments and other competitions

In order to become sustainable SIDAREC is looking to equip the center with call-in services, printing and photocopying services. In addition, they would like an internet cafe for residents as the nearest is 15km away. SIDAREC will charge for this service, which

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will offset costs of running the after school programs.

Design Considerations:

Participants are challenged to incorporate the needs of the community and to employ sustainable and/or local building material using local labor to realize their design.

Space Considerations:

SIDAREC currently owns a 0.5 acre site that already holds an early childhood center, health clinic and small gathering hall. The land is also used for sports tournaments and drama competitions. The challenge is to design a new building on the existing site.

Youth Media Lab and Library

Site area: 0.5 acres

Facility footprint: 180 – 240 m²

Total occupancy: 150 - 300 persons

Community Components

- Library with computer lab for students (capacity: 20 students/ 10 workstations)
- Computer training center and conference room (capacity: 45 persons/10 workstations)
- Internet cafe with printing and photocopying services (capacity: 40 persons/15 workstations)
- Area for payphones (both local and international)
- Daycare center where children of young girls participating in our programs are attended (capacity: 50 children and 5 adults)
- Reception area
- Secure storage area

Radio Station

- Broadcasting room
- Production studio

Outdoor Public Space

- Basketball/tennis court and small football (soccer) pitch
- Outdoor amphitheatre for community theatrical presentations

Administration Space

- Offices (2) for staff members
- Computer training center
- Internet café
- Reception

Other Considerations:

SIDAREC would also like to create a wireless network (range of 600m) to allow as many people as possible access to the Internet.

| Site |

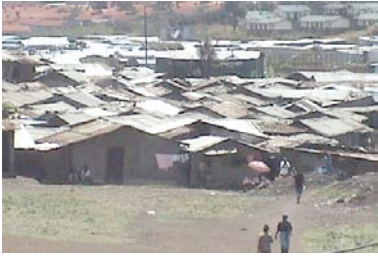
Mukuru Kwa Njenga, an informal settlement located in Embakasi Division, 12km east of the center of Nairobi, Kenya

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| **Environment** |

Climate: Tropical Wet and Dry
Temperature: 24-27C (75-80F)
Rainfall: 900 mm
Latitude: -1.28°
Longitude: 36.82°

Special Conditions:
Minor earthquakes and tremors occasionally occur.

| **Construction Budget** |

Total Construction Budget: \$150,000 USD

| **Sponsors** |

About 50x15

The 50x15 Initiative, launched by AMD in 2004 at the World Economic Forum, is a bold and far-reaching effort to develop new technology and solutions that will help enable affordable Internet access and computing capability for 50 percent of the world's population by the year 2015. More than just goodwill, 50x15 is about fostering long-term economic progress and investment within high-growth markets in ways that benefit a wide range of people and businesses. For more information, visit www.50x15.com.

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About Architecture for Humanity

Architecture for Humanity is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that seeks architectural solutions to humanitarian crises and provides design services to communities in need. Currently it is involved in the reconstruction of homes on the Gulf Coast, rebuilding after the South Asia Tsunami and the construction of health-care facilities in Sub-Saharan Africa. For more information, please visit www.architectureforhumanity.org.

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About the Open Architecture Network

The Open Architecture Network is an online, open source community dedicated to improving living conditions through innovative and sustainable design. For more information please visit: www.openarchitecturenetwork.org.