organising of space
about a orphanage in Tanzania

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Is humanitarian design the new imperialism? Does our desire to help do more harm than good?

Source: http://www.fastcodesign.com/1661859/is-humanitarian-design-the-new-imperialism
In my BA project, I travelled to Tanzania with a MFS stipend and experienced humanitarian architecture up close - by following architectural group Asant Collective’s project in Tanzania: a new Children Centre for a small non-governmental organization called ECONEF.

I have worked with social questions / responsibilities regarding our role as interior architects in developing countries - often feeling like an anthropologist.

In my design part, I have re-drew the layout for ECONEF’s planned new orphanage after an analyse of the existing orphanage, culture and traditions.
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When I read that headline of an article, my first instinct was anger. I was doing research to a course. Writing an essay about “humanitarian architecture”. Did not really know how to approach the subject. This was a niche in my future profession I knew very little about. But it got me even more curious. Could it really be? That people who only had good intentions to help, ended up leaving bigger scars?

During the recent years, I have grown a bigger interest in caring for people less fortunate. It felt natural for me to continue challenging my self and experience something I had never done before. That is what I like to do, and I wanted to know more about how my knowledge could be used in surroundings other than the culture I grew up in.

Interior architecture is spoken about as a superficial profession – is it really so?
INTRODUCTION

My project is based on my interest in caring. It sounds like a fat cliché, and it is. But I am not able to ignore the facts that are constantly (involuntary) flashing in front of me through media channels anymore. I believe it is cruelness to ignore. Even the subjects that is difficult to talk about.

I wanted this project to be a start to my future perspective on our profession, *interior architect*. I wanted to get involved. Not necessarily always abroad, but also within our own borders. These are words I am not used to scream out loud.

My journey to chose this Bachelor project began the fall semester 2013, when we had our annual “Critical Thinking” course. My courage came to the surface, and I further on decided to learn more about the subject “Humanitarian Architecture” when I also wrote an essay about it - getting to know the history and the many “faces” of it. I started to realize this was a subject within our field I knew very little about and got more curious about it. Further on I got in contact with *Arkitekter Utan Gränser* when I was in the process of applying for internships. I wanted to continue my learning curve, and have an internship at someone who knew more about the subject. Through them I got in contact with Asante. That was the birth of my project. A very spontaneous idea during my first meeting with them, ended in me applying for a Minor Field Study scholarship from SIDA to experience this opportunity by first hand. The scholarship was approved and I was on my way to Tanzania.

There are multiple examples of engineers, architects and product / industrial design projects in developing countries. But the profession I’m educating to be is seldom represented in humanitarian architecture abroad. Why it is so, is a question I wanted to explore. Many times during my trip I felt like a *social anthropologic* interior architect. And that is a privilege!
PURPOSE
To continue develop and expand my experience as a interior architect. Participate in a process to do something good for someone else - to learn how architectural projects are unfolded in developing countries, different contexts and cultures. Lifting up a field within our education and profession that gets little attention.

THESIS
An important question that "haunted" me from the beginning and followed me throughout my process was: what is our role as an interior architect in a developing country? Why should they care about how it look and how a space affect them when many minds are occupied with if the harvesting is going to be good this year, will my home survive the next big rain or will my kids be fed enough today?

Is there a need for an interior architect in a developing country like Tanzania where food, shelter and water are basic needs who not everyone have?

How can I as an outside person, design in a new context I know very little about, and not intrusive my ideas? How can I not be an "design imperalist"?

METHOD
My method was to travel to the country - then use my new profound knowledge to create inspiring space's for the new orphanage. My project is divided in two phases with different approach to methods: research and drawing

"design imperalist" = a designer who impose their ideas without taking the context in consideration
WHAT IS OUR ROLE AS AN INTERIOR ARCHITECT IN A DEVELOPING COUNTRY?
AMPLE DAYLIGHT CASCADES DOWN ALONG THE SURFACE AS ONE FEELS LIKE BEING OUTSIDE WHILE ACTUALLY BEING INSIDE.
THE SQUARE OPENINGS ARE **CARVED** OUT FROM A SERIES OF INTERSECTING WALLS THAT FREELY **VENTILATE** THE INTERIORS AND ALLOW FOR A FLUID CIRCULATION.
In 2007 Charlotte Lindquist met Caroline Nicholas during a trip in Tanzania. She was a local woman who had started to take care and give orphans a home in her private house. Together they started ECONEF, an independent NGO (non-governmental organization) located in Juu Kali, outside of Arusha in northern Tanzania. The aim for the organization was to help improve the standard of living for orphans in the area.

In 2011 Carolina Wikström and Frida Öster did an architectural program for a new ECONEF Children’s Centre in Kingori, Tanzania, as their Master project at KTH. After their graduation, Pilvi Vanamo got engaged in the project and is now the third architect responsible for the project. Together the girls have created Asante Collective and are realising the project in collaboration with Arkitekter Utan Gränser.

BACKGROUND

Caroline Nicholas
Charlotte Lindquist
Pilvi Vanamo
Carolina Wikström
Frida Öster

Description of the project is taken from the organization’s website:

“The aim of the Children’s Center Project is to increase ECONEF’S independence and reduce its reliance on private donations. To help achieve this goal the new buildings will be sustainable and largely maintenance free. The center will produce its own electricity through the installation of solar panels. Integrated into the building’s structures will be systems for rainwater collection and natural ventilation. Areas for livestock such as chickens, cows and vegetables are connected to the buildings. The buildings have also been designed to minimize the need for outsourced building expertise and excessive transportation costs. To realize this, the use of local materials and traditional building techniques has been prioritized.”
Since then, the architects have focused on building a prototype house to test techniques, materials, budget and so on. This is the first time any of them are building in a developing country like Tanzania. The house is per day nearly finished and will be a guest house in the future.

The project is based on the former Master project, but has evolved a great deal since. The new changes have not been drawn into the existing drawings, and it is therefore a great need to start developing these. The program for the new orphanage has stood still since 2011 - and need to be re-evaluated. The plan is to start building the next summer, if enough money is collected and drawings are ready.

My Bachelor project is not commissioned by the architects, but will be available to them after finish. I am very grateful for the openness they have showed me, our discussions and everything I have learnt from them. They have been important mentors for me during my process.
ARCHITECTURAL CONCEPT

The main architectural concept is to collect water through the roof construction. See appendix number 2 for more information or go to econef.org or asante.se.

The existing layout/organisation of space have several examples of why this space is not optimal for the orphanage today. For example, the bedrooms (8) are individual and not under control of a Mama, which is regulated by the Tanzanian Government. Another example is the toilets (18) who are too far away from the bedrooms (8) - e.g., the kids must walk a long way when using the toilets during nighttime, which is not optimal.

drawings by Asante Collective
PART ONE
7 weeks in the northern part in Tanzania
going to know their culture, traditions and habits
analysing and observing
I had never been in Africa, so the whole first week went to get to know the area I was staying in, being comfortable in my new surroundings and building up a trust with Caroline. Two from the team was also there - starting up the work at site again, which had been standing still since December.

I shared my time between being at the orphanage and helping at site. I went on the “famous-magical-shopping” trips, haunting in the area for the materials needed - an interesting experience which taught me a lot about local materials, their culture and ways of communication. I started to learn some daily phrases in Swahili, which makes your life there so much easier - the locals quicker “accept” you, which is very important.

I want to point out it is not the same being there as a tourist than being there to get something done / a student. The scene is completely different.

* team = architects & volunteers working with the prototype house
* site = at Kingori, the new plot where the prototype is being built
Caroline, Pilvi and Sara planning at site

The lush surroundings and rough road

playing

Shopping list

One of the many hardware stores we visited

the kids
One of my goals was to get to know their carpentry traditions and learn how it is to really *collaborate* with a Tanzanian. During my internship at Asante Architects in January, I designed a bunk bed for the new orphanage - which I now was to realise and build a prototype of. Watoto Foundations is an organisation that takes street boys from Arusha and gives them an opportunity to get education – including vocational exercise in carpentry. They have done the doors and windows for the prototype house – but the result was not all good. So with that in mind, I had a challenge to get everything straight, both construction and material.

The project gave me great insight. More than I had hoped for. But it was a struggle. How to communicate idea, design and technical drawings. How to communicate with someone who knows little English. How to actually get the work done to a deadline. I project managed and supervised the process every second day for three weeks. Regularly reminding them to keep the “speed” up, and controlling that everything got straight. The bed was nearly finished, fixed at site. Though the concept is very new to them – it is going to be tested and evaluated. I am very grateful for getting a close relationship with the head carpenter Tete. In the end, we learned much from each other - I, local carpentry traditions and techniques for construction and they modern drawings and structure.
The wood workshop

Discussing model, drawings, measurements, deadlines, process and construction techniques

Local wood types

Making test pieces of wood types and testing a technique

Socialising over lunch with the teachers

Boys being supervised by teacher
**Detail beam**

**Local technique**

**Fixing the frames with mosquito net**

*Discussing an planning a plan B*

*Detail beam*

*Detail frames, local solution*
Transporting the bed to site

Bed fixed at site

The carved pattern

Tete and I
My method was observance, also through participating in activities. I have analysed the existing orphanage, and also made study visits other orphanages, schools etc to have something to compare to, learn more and get inspired.

Many rooms are very simple and square, and there are huge contrasts. I visited well organised places like SOS Village, who have high quality in buildings and hygiene, and smaller places with much lower standard.

The experiences of all these different spaces - light, size and colour - serve as a stable base when I designed the new program for the orphanage.
LOCATION & SURROUNDINGS EXISTING ORPHANAGE

up towards smaller villages close to Mt Merut

to Leganga, 30 min walk (main tarmac Moshi-Arusha road)

* There is unfortunately a bit uncertainty of reliable which of these buildings who are Carolines home, since the house has changed a lot in recent years and we are not sure when Google maps have taken their pictures. It makes most sense where the blue pin is placed.

The village (area) called Jua Kali

"main street"
The following illustrations show a simplified plan without dimensions and windows, cause it is not relevant in this analysis. But all the conditions are correct - measurements have been taken.

The house has evolved cognitively during the recent years, adding facilities and buildings after the growing needs.
FACILITIES

- **firewood storage**
- **food storage**
- **inner yard**
- **sink for dishes**
- **water tower**
- **washing area for clothes**
- **storage dried maize**
- **watchdog 1**
- **watchdog 2**
- **small ‘oven’ where they burn all kind of trash**
- **area where the watchman stays (sleeps) during nighttime**
- **a second gate, which leads out to the village Jua Kali - but it is always closed!**
The space is rarely used. It is the first sight that meet you when you walk in the gate, who is always locked. The kids does not use this space to play.
This space is used to pass through to get to the inner yard, where almost all activity is happening. During night, one of the watchdog is free here. A pretty dark space overshadowed by trees from the neighbour plot.
When you walk through the second, small gate - the space opens up and you can clearly see the multi-functional use the inner yard has. Its the most popular space, where almost all activities are. From drying maize to playing to doing homework.
area where they wash their clothes, hang them and do the dishes. The kids sit on the big sink when washing their clothes.

Most of the dishes are done on the ground.

This space I believe is good design, though some small adjustments should be done e.g. occurring height and accessibility to the kids. But it is a successfully addition with good functionality.
This space is also an example of a well functioning space – though it is too small. This is the space where everything is happening. The space also changes with furniture’s being moved around to seek shadow during the day.
Another view of the multi-functional inner yard.
EXTENDED ORPHANAGE

Girls:
Husna, 11 years
Selina, 11 years
Jackline, 11 years
Brenda, 13 years

Mixed:
Mama Godi Clinton, 5 years
Maria, 5 years
Jackson, 6 years
Naomi, 6 years
Maria, 9 years
Nemusa, 12 years
Frida, 13 years

Boys:
Nixon, 11 years
Rajabu, 11 years
Brian, 13 years
Faraja, 14 years

office
bedroom
bedroom
(x)

bathroom
storage
kitchen
pipe

9
10
7
8
traditional Soforia, that makes all the food

the kitchen

depth, oval pans

heated by firewood

small food storage
The observance and getting to know their traditional way of preparing and making food was one of the experiences I appreciated the most - since I had no idea how their routines during this ritual was before I travelled down.
the small kittens was living (nesting) under the soforia
STUDY VISIT’S: KITCHEN

Canteen at Watoto

Dish place for big pans at Watoto

Dish at SOS Village Zanzibar

some kind of solution for ventilation

bigger sofrias - that could feed up to 90 people in one pan. One of them was also running on bio gas

very common to have casted interior

Dish / clothes washing bench in two heights at Watoto

Kitchenbench at Watoto

Sink at SOS Village Zanzibar
37

Traditional kitchen in a separate house because of fire risk

Kitchen at Sabato Day Care Center

Kitchen Youth Centre SOS Village Zanzibar

Kitchen family house SOS Village Arusha

Kitchen family house SOS Village Zanzibar
EXAMPLE OF A PREPARATION PROCESS

maize transported from field

Step 1, drying maize

Step 2, get grains to detach from the cob

Step 3, separate grains from cob

Step 4, cleansing the grains from dirt

Step 5: maize grains being stored in tin boxes
COMMON WAYS OF PREPARING FOOD / WORKING POSITIONS

a big pot balanced on rocks with firewood underneath

chapati being made, very common food

street food: grilled maize

a very common portion to do any task in the "kitchen:
sitting squatted on a bucket
a picture illustrating the working position when they do the dishes on the ground - the most common way
8 bathroom

The toilet is accessed through the shower. It is also an English closet, but apparently it is illegal to have at an orphanage (contagion risk).

Asian toilet - regulated by the Government
STUDY VISITS: BATHROOM

Urinoarer without door at Watoto

Extremely thight space, but the light created a sakral ambience which made the place interesting.

Toilet at Faraja Orphanage

Toilet Sabato Day Care Center

Showers at Watoto

Toilet SOS Village Arusha

Shower SOS Village Arusha
mosquito net - regulated by the Government

9 boys bedroom

10 mixed bedroom
STUDY VISIT'S. BEDROOM

Bedroom 4 children SOS Village Zanzibar

Bedroom 4 children SOS Village Arusha

Bedroom 8 boys Watoto Foundation

Combined bed and desk/closet

Dormitories Faraja Orphanage

Dormitories Faraja Orphanage
The school system in Tanzania is special. Every child has a "right" to go to school - but many don't, cause of several reasons. The Govermental school has unfortunately a bad reputation; therefore Caroline wanted to have controle over the learning for the kids. The organisation has four teachers on salary, which means luxury conditions for the kids. Only Faraja attends school outside, because he is in class 6.
The building belonged originally to a neighbour. It is not at all finish construction wise, but it works as a space. The space work ok, but the kids have trouble concentrating.

The traditional way of teaching and traditional furniture

big windows create good light, but when it rains, it rains inside
STUDY VISIT’S: CLASSROOM

Masai School Ngorongoro

Sabato Day Care Center

Madjachai Day Care Center

Watoto classroom

Classroom at Faraja Orphanage

Lab / classroom at SOS Village Arusha
PART TWO
limitations and architectural analyze
Site Plan Kingori

Area around:
Almost only fields and rural villages.
45 minute walk to closest "town".
Red, volcanic soil. Few trees and no water or electricity.
map over the distance between the existing orphanage and the new site
These are the architectural elements that define the expression whom I have to relate my design to, and not change.
FREE IN DESIGN OF PROPORTIONS / SHAPE

... AND POSITIONING / ROTATION

---

roof
walls
outdoor space
PROPOSAL TO CHANGE: create connection to the architecture from a inside point of view.

The present prototype building has a suspended ceiling under the wood beam – closing off the space. The rooms lack character - when you go into one room, it's like walking into any room. In my design proposal I will remove this in order to make contact with the beautiful architecture that is visible from the outside: make the sisal poles (with light streaming through) and the wood beams visible from the inside.

I have considered and taken into account the issues this may create – see sketch.
LIMITATIONS: in the existing building structure

1. The layout is naturally divided in the middle due to the roof structure with supporting points in the middle.

2. That again provides limitations how the rooms will be organized accordance with access to the rooms:
   - access to the rooms from an enclosed building
   - access to the rooms from the outside

3. Also in relation to the roof inclination, it is limited how wide one side of the roof may be because the roof will become too high.
RESPECT TO THE SUN

In that climate it is particularly important to show attention to the sun. The site is close to equator, which means that the sun cycles’ is almost the same every day the year around. The sun is up around 12 hours each day, arising from east to west with 60-90 degrees midday. So when I started sketching on the layout for the houses, I always had the suns position in close consideration. It was important to create as much natural shadow as possible – making the most of the spaces outdoors.

KEYPOINTS:
Protection from the sun
Create as much natural shadow outdoors
HOW TO ORGANISE THE SPACE AT A ORPHANAGE?

In the area there are mainly two ways how to organize the layout of the space at an orphanage:

**Structure 1**

The big property is surrounded by fence and have several small houses inside the area creating a very enclosed space from the outside.

For example: SOS Village

**Structure 2**

Smaller area is fenced, creating a more intimate and homely space.

For example: traditional homes
PART THREE
designing a new layout for the orphanage
Every room have a process
I always starts with the function of the room
and measurements related to the human body
I think of how the rooms need to be related to each other,
where to access from
and where the light comes from
which room is sensible to sun exposing?
"Corner theory" - light from more than one side of the room create the illusion
that the space is bigger

I start to sketch each house separately
it's about being space efficient, but not space cheap
the activities and functions being organised in the mapping process
I sketch, draw in CAD, print, evaluate and look, re-draw on top
I have hundreds of small diagrams
until I am ok satisfied with the layout
- cause I know things will change in the continuing process

I start to put the houses in relations to each other,
creating space in the void between
defining space
- and things get changed
I continuously re-draw the layout of all of the houses
where will it be shadows?
During several conversations with Caroline in Tanzania, I got an understanding of what her vision for the new orphanage is. Through observation and an interview with her, I mapped all of the necessities that must exist: I analyze the existing orphanage. I mapped the necessities, activities, movements, and processes. Who will use the room and how. I organized the words into groups, and rooms begin to form. Some rooms are defined, some are areas.
A structure is created out of four volumes and spaces outside:

Caroline wants to expand the orphanage in the future to 24 kids - just duplicating the family house.
IMPORTANCE OF THE INNER YARD: adapted from the existing orphanage

The current orphanage is structured so that all the buildings are "talking" inward against an inner yard. This structure is by observations and asking a very successful space, both children and adults really like. The programme from 2007 is also built on the idea to create an inner yard, and I see no reason to change that, because it is after my opinion also the best solution to create a homely feeling. Such a space provides security and is recognizable for children. My proposal for the new orphanage's layout will exist of four buildings, which are independent but together create spaces between – the inner yards. In Tanzania, the rooms created outdoors, because of the climate, is at least as important as the ones indoors.

KEYPOINTS:
Create space in the void between the houses.
The organisation of the orphanage reflect in the buildings organisation.
KEYPOINTS:
Classrooms flexible for change -> concept with folding doors
dividing the space from one big room to four small
Light from several angles
Perforated walls as sunscreen
sketches the kitchen house

KEYPOINTS:
The space is organised after how they make food
Learn from their traditions and adapt the design
Do not intrusive modern kitchen methods
Play with boundaries between inside and outside
Create a pedagogical space for children to learn cooking
Create a space with an overview of the rest of the orphanage
KEYPOINTS:
A private and personal home
Bedrooms an inspiring space to be -> integrated beds
"more than just a bed"
Bedrooms be equal in matter of light
Some personal space for Mama
/ sketch relating buildings and creating space
I base my design on parameters like:

- space
- watertank
- roof
- access to the rooms
- sunexposure
- how to protect from the sun (perforated wall)
- where the light is
- shadow / space outdoor
- movement pattern
I work with diagrams and sketches. I shape the rooms based on the user and its needs. The rooms are organized in relations to each other. It's about being space efficient, but not space cheap.

I consider how a child may move around the space during the day: Relations between the volumes and the rooms.
I want to create room in the void between the volumes. Because the space outdoors is as important as indoors. Which ‘way’ is the volumes speaking?

The inner yard provides protection, social security and a homely feeling.
Since the orphanage have a public profile through the organisation ECONEF, it is important that the orphanage welcome visitors but also separate the public space from the private home - protecting the children from that part of the business.

As a response to the climate - I play with the contrasts of what's inside, outside and in between.
/ THE FINAL LAYOUT
THE INNER YARD: "THE HEART" of the orphanage
The entrance house is open to the environment around. With an office, a meeting room and a nurse with a sickbay to take care of sick children or isolate. To have a nurse is regulated by the government.

The school is temporarily. Because in the future they want to build a bigger one for the community. There are four (flexible) classrooms, a babysclass and a small ICT room / library. The void between the buildings create a good place for shade and rest. Also the teachers office is close to the public space and a handicap toilet which also serves as a visitors toilet.

The family house consists of 12 children and a Mama who take care of them. A important moment in the sketching process is the social room, both outside and inside. The family house is completely enclosed due to security, so that Mama has control of all the children during nighttime, and the toilets are indoor. Four babies must sleep in the same room as Mama, but she will also have the opportunity for a little privacy with the large folding doors to divide the space.

The "pavillion" in the middle is a structure with only roof, creating outdoor space with shadow - mainly a eating area, but can also be used to other activities.

In the future, they may want to expand the orphanage with another familyhouse - therefore both the laundry-yard and the kitchen is made big enough to hold up to 25 children (with staff). The family houses layout could just be duplicated to expand.
SUN STUDIES
About 80% of the activities happens outdoors, so I focused on creating good spaces outdoor. They always seek shadow, so it was important to be aware of where the shadow will be during the different times of the day.
The big inner yard with its different areas are casted in one plan, which allows furniture on wheel to move around during the day - hunting the shadows!
In this project I have not focused on choosing materials, but one example can be to cast the floor in different colors, separating areas and putting a playful ambience to the space. Here you see the local, traditional technique when casting colored floors.
After conversation with the kids their greatest wish was a place where they could cuddle and relax - I’ve chosen to illustrate this by making a tribune where they can relax, but that also works in official contexts.

I have integrated a concepts with round rods and textile that easily creates shade and room, to develop and encourage children’s play and creativity. The round rods are easily placed in cast holes in the concrete. This is a concept I have worked with in a previous student project.

/ AREA FOR RELAXING: the stairs
Since the school is only temporary, the rooms needed to be flexible for future use.

The room can be divided in four small classrooms by big folding doors or used as a big room to for example vocational exercise, dancing lessons, sewing class or a library.

A perforated wall (also the fence) is meant to prevent direct sun exposure into the classrooms.

The playyard is an open space - for bigger activities. And the void between the buildings has a roof, which creates a good place for shadow. I have suggested that there should be some form of “island” which can be used in many ways - to relax, to play, to read. The yard have the same holes in the ground, where round rods can be placed to create football goals or a tent.
/ SCENARIO 1: classrooms

the perforated wall outside protecting from the sun

no suspended ceiling

concrete floor colored
SCENARIO 2: dance class with the Masai

the folding doors separating the room
The roof beams can be used in different ways. Here a swing is attached.
a hut creates

the pavilion

football goal created
I did a thorough research of their processes and routines around preparing and cooking food. I observed, studied and mapped the needs that exist for the orphanage. It is very interesting and unlike ours.

Casted interior is very common, and I have been inspired by this - cause the interior need to be strong enough to be roughly handled.

My proposal to the kitchen layout is designed after their routines. The space is very open to its environment: semi-outdoor. It is only the food storage who is an enclosed space.

The big folding doors allows the Mama's to open up the kitchen and have overview over the inner yard. I have reused a architectural element; the perforated walls ventilates and give light to the space.
To cook is an activity that Mamas do almost all day, therefore I have created this pool for two reasons: social and hygiene. I do not want to change their way of making food, but design the space to their premises. Now, the area where they prepare the food, the kids play, the cats pee etc. So this “food pool” is an area designated to handling food. It is a square, with two edges one can sit on, and the area can be easily washed.

My starting point: the very common working position; sitting squatted on a plastic bucket
a bigger sink where the kids for example can get drinking water during the day

a step for the kids to get up to a good working height

area for soforia’s

/ the working bench
It is a small edge that make the working bench a “sink” easy to wash vegetables and prepare food.

perforated wall
No sisal poles to enclose the space

Perforated wall

Washing area close to the ground for big pans

Sink for dishes in two heights: one for kids and one for adults
The distance between the walls top height and the roof is not covered. This creates light and ventilation - but also expose the architecture: the wooden roof beams.

Outdoor area for food processes - here, drying maize on a big sheaf of plastic.

Big tin cans for storage of maize, rice and beans

The folding doors being closed.
I will probably never be satisfied with my answers regarding to the questions I have asked myself - cause it is a continuing adventure with more experiences to come.

So, is there a need for an interior architect in a country like Tanzania, where food, shelter and water are basic needs who not everyone have? It depend on which perspective you choose to take.

Why should they care about how it look and how a space affect them? Many minds are occupied with if the harvesting is going to be good this year, will my home survive the next big rain or will my kids be fed enough today? It is a complicated matter.

But in matters of public spaces, like building a new school, a university, a new youth centre or a orphanage (these "businesses" is booming right now) – the role of a interior architect is existing. But not the need. The condition is that we use our knowledge to facilitate their traditional way of life and work. Design is more about function than esthetic.

I feel I am left with many negative thoughts about Tanzanian's culture - politically wise. I do not wish for me to only see the negative, but it is what is overwhelming, upsetting me and it would be foolish to ignore it. It is important to raise a voice against just "cuddling them up" – cause our naivety is slowly ruining their communities. I've been a victim to so many bad situations and developments that can only have grown from Europeans influence.

Many Tanzanian people have become so independent on aid – which I am afraid where it is going to end. And when I say become, many have not yet, but the direction is laid. We have poured into the community, left a trace scaring them forever.
To collect all my memories and work, I made a book (350 pages) with many big pictures, quotes and illustrations.
I choose to exhibit a short movie with sound, projected on the floor – so you can sit like a real Tanzanian squatted on colored buckets. The political view on why I choose to project on the floor, is also to illustrate how our society is stamping on their society with all the “careless” aid money that is poured into their country.

The buckets symbolize a very common working position; when for example preparing food. Sitting squatted on these is how they do many tasks in Tanzania. The buckets are seen everywhere, with the multi purpose of used to either carry vegetables, water or working as a sitting element etc.

The video shows the kids in different situations – and much of the film is taken by some of the kids. I also projected some questions that have been essential to me during my process. The sound playing in the headphones is the kids voices but also one of the top pop songs during the time I was there. When listening to this, it takes me straight back to Tanzania and the orphanage.
THANKs to Caroline & her kids. Pilvi, Carolina and Frida at Asante Collective!