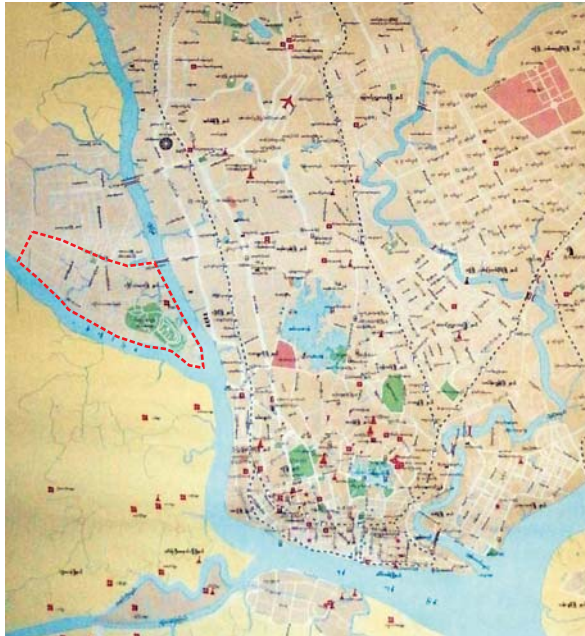


# LEARNING BY WORKING WITH PEOPLE

## At Yangon, Myanmar

<b>Location:</b>	Ale Yaw ward, Hlaing Tar Yar Township, Yangon, MYANMAR
<b>Workshop title:</b>	Comprehensive site planning's workshop with Pan Thakhin women saving group
<b>Situation:</b>	Community located in unsecured land from development pressure
<b>Solution:</b>	Relocation to new location where near existing community
<b>No. Of household:</b>	21 Households
<b>Total area:</b>	60 x 320 feet
<b>Plot / household :</b>	18 x 40 feet
<b>Working agency:</b>	Women for the World [WFW] Architecture, Engineering Construction and General Service Co-Operative Limited [ACGC] Asian Coalition for Housing Rights [ACHR]
<b>Year:</b>	August_2010



Red boundary showing Hlaing Tharyar Industrial Zone where the poor community locating

### Brief about Pan Thakhin women saving group and community's struggle

Pan Thakhin group is the one of 5 women saving groups in urban context of Myanmar which has been organized by Women for the World. Pan Thakhin means "the king of flower" in Burmese language and it has 29 members of saving group which had already 2 years of saving after Cyclone Nagris hit the Irrawaddy delta. The saving group can divided into 3 sub-groups of 29 members (family), which 8 families of 1st group had already own their land, but the left 21 families of last 2 groups has rent the private land. On this private land where the land's price has been swinging up with market price due to this zone -according official development plan- has to be developed as industrial zone for foreign investor. Even this area is only earthen lane running down and connecting community together, no electricity and water supply, and having only water hand-pump and gasoline generator as basic resources. But still this property can make a big money to owner to looking for speculators.

Due to this land and its location are pending to be invested by foreign investors (China, Korean, and Vietnam) to develop the vast empty land as a industrial zone in which some part had been already finished developed to be big warehouse. And private land's owner is tending to sell it out someday. So that Pan Thakhin saving group and the village elderly are seeking to purchase the government's land where are near their settlement, before this land's price will be higher than they can afford

*(In 2009 cost of this land around 800 Kyat / sq.ft but this year it reach to 1250 Kyat / sq.ft)*

### People as the "SUBJECT" for development

Keeping in mind that all working processes still keep the space for people to share their idea and let people themselves be the subject of their problem & struggle as much as it can be, is our ethos. Sometime people does not feel like to participate it does not mean we have to stop participation and lead all work process. But it mean some mistake might be occurring along the way from both side -working agency or people. So, if we can find the right way, we just only need to give them an encouragement and chance (which people never experience in institutional framework of development) in the beginning. Later on, people will learn their role to play when working with together.



### Working process's daily

#### 1st Day : Getting start with people by talking, surveying and planning

We visited community and spend a half day to talk with people and tried to find out the starting point of workshop. So we got to know the history, and saving structure and related aspect, got the map of community as well as people's idea that they started looking for the available land and its possible price that they can purchase.



Afternoon we asked people to take us around their community to observe and learn the problems. So we found out the possibility together, then we planed about workshop for tomorrow.

**2nd Day : Working together by experimenting, listening , and sharing**

We let each of saving group tell us about their saving process and amount that they can save for housing scheme per month (around 20,000 Kyat/month). For man group we asked them to draw community map, its location and size of available land. From the saving group's presentation we helped them to calculate the possibility of land purchasing and how to manage the left money to cop with the cost of construction, if they can regularly save 20,000 Kyat/month for 10 year. Then people realized this possibility right from beginning as the aim of this workshop.

After having same information, then we asked people to draw the dream community, by this process we together learned about how people are thinking about their community, how big for one household's plot , traditional house styles and its component. After that we found the idea about the size of house, size of plot & community lane, what basic infrastructures are needed and what can be shared; our idea was more clear. So this process was fun when children got involve.



Man and woman group busy with their work. -summarize the community map & saving data and basic information-



All sub-groups sharing their saving & basic information (occupation, saving ability, household info) to everybody



Each group drawing and presenting their "dream community", by this process we learned about people's idea also created open space that people can find collective idea together

After drawing and discussion about dream community, we together laid out the site plan for all 21 households by assuming that the color paper we gave are the plot of land per one household (60x40 ft.) and train them to calculate the land price according its size by utilize this color paper as a tool. Then people fold the color paper as the size they can afford as per their saving. Subsequently most of people would like to have land only 20x40 ft. because they started thinking about house and shared infrastructure cost. So then they started arrange all 21 papers in big paper which assumed as the available land which men group had drawn it before. We intervene along this process by questioning about how to create livable community which everyone could share infrastructures to minimize the cost of construction and equality of land accessible, and where to put toilet and pig-shade on real location.

We wrapped up all things that people achieved today; which there were about site planning, size of house's plot and total land and rough cost for land, house, infrastructure that everyone can afford in 10 years if they can save regularly as their plan.



Realizing the cost of land and the house's plot that people can afford according their saving

In every process of working with people, the key of success and keeping process continue smoothly is the good listening and making the space along the process, where people can play their roles.

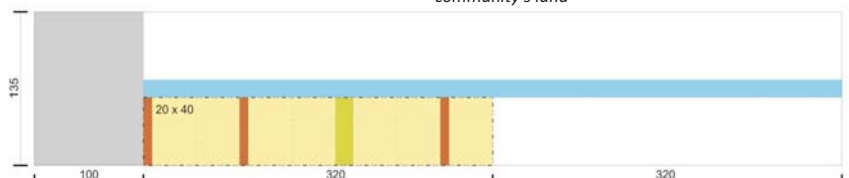


3 ideas from people about how to lay-out the new community



Realizing the wide of community lane

Calculate the total area and its cost of new community's land



Idea of plot's lay out, the output of 2nd day

### 3rd Day : Working together by experimenting, listening , and sharing

We spend a time before getting start on day 3 by wrapping up last 2 days processes and drew the rough financial idea of this project, and let them understand clearly about possibility. Then we introduced an idea of ACCA program as the tool to implement their dream with their capacity

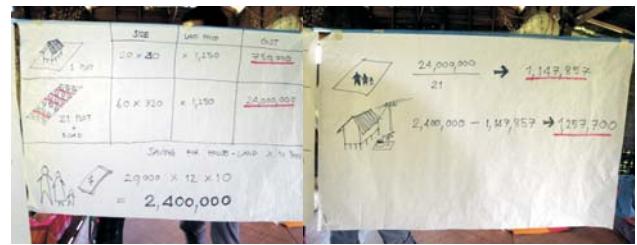
Next, we arranged exercise about dimension's visualization, about how the land of one household is actually big. As consequence people started, again, minimize their household plot from 20x40 ft. to be 18x40 ft. Then people re-planning their community layout. But today the idea of common space for small businesses came-out, and they committed to keep this space fronting the road.

Then we continually gave them other color papers representing house, toilet, pig-shade, water hand-pump and tree to them and asked them to put in their plot. Finally we discussed about how community will be like and how people will live together, sharing some infrastructure to save the budget.

After the intensely working together during 3 days of workshop, we showed the case study of housing project from Thailand, and related aspects such as low-cost housing, bamboo techniques, and bio-gas. So people really appreciated and started relating their community to those success cases.

During the workshop in which local architect and engineer of ACGC participated, they understood the design with people's process and getting more involved by preparing the low-cost house drawing and feasibility to discuss with people and community's carpenters. Then the idea of incremental design came out from discussion with concrete idea of budget, that people can build the core house and spontaneously improve according their ability.

Two days later we went to ACGC's office with Women for the World and discuss about how to work together, and how ACGC can play important role of this project.



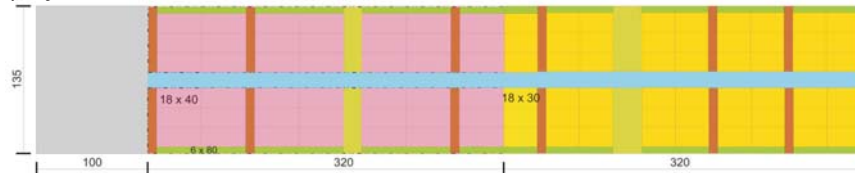
From 2nd day output, we sum-up the information that people can related from their saving



Visualizing process to make people understand of the actual area of house's plot, after this process people naturally decrease their house's plot



After building consensus about size of house's plot, people start readjusting community's layout again, this process can check their understanding of yesterday layout



The final layout which including idea to purchase whole area and distributing to all poor by saving co-operative



By letting people do it, they feel the freedom, even it is only model but it is the model to make their dream happen



Low-cost house plan which ACGC prepared for people

### Creative environment and other conditions to make working process success

#### - "Trust" between Development agency and people

Thanks to Women for the World, who already build the trust among community groups, and between community and development agency. From this **Trust** it help us as an outsider to work smoothly with people. Without this trust, collective idea and concrete solution will not be happen.

#### - Working atmospheres

The workshop's place is the one of key aspect for working with people, this time we were lucky to get this place -where usually used for religious activities- from help of village elderly. The cozy mood and enclosed space created the values of working together & concentration. Due to this place is mentally belonged to people, people feel easily to move around, and for us it made us pay more respect to people and listen carefully when we all together sitting on the same wooden floor.

This same place also was the eating place of lunch when we were working together. Even if we did not have lunch on the same table due to the their tradition, but we still feel we are the guest rather than the professional who having a distance with people.

The last good thing to create working atmosphere during workshop for 3 days is there were village elderly sat with us, and gave some suggestion and comment. This condition can make people feels more confident and confirmed



Discussion between ACGC and community and carpenter, then came up with idea of core house for incremental construction



We just transformed the people's answers to make it more practical and easy to communicate