

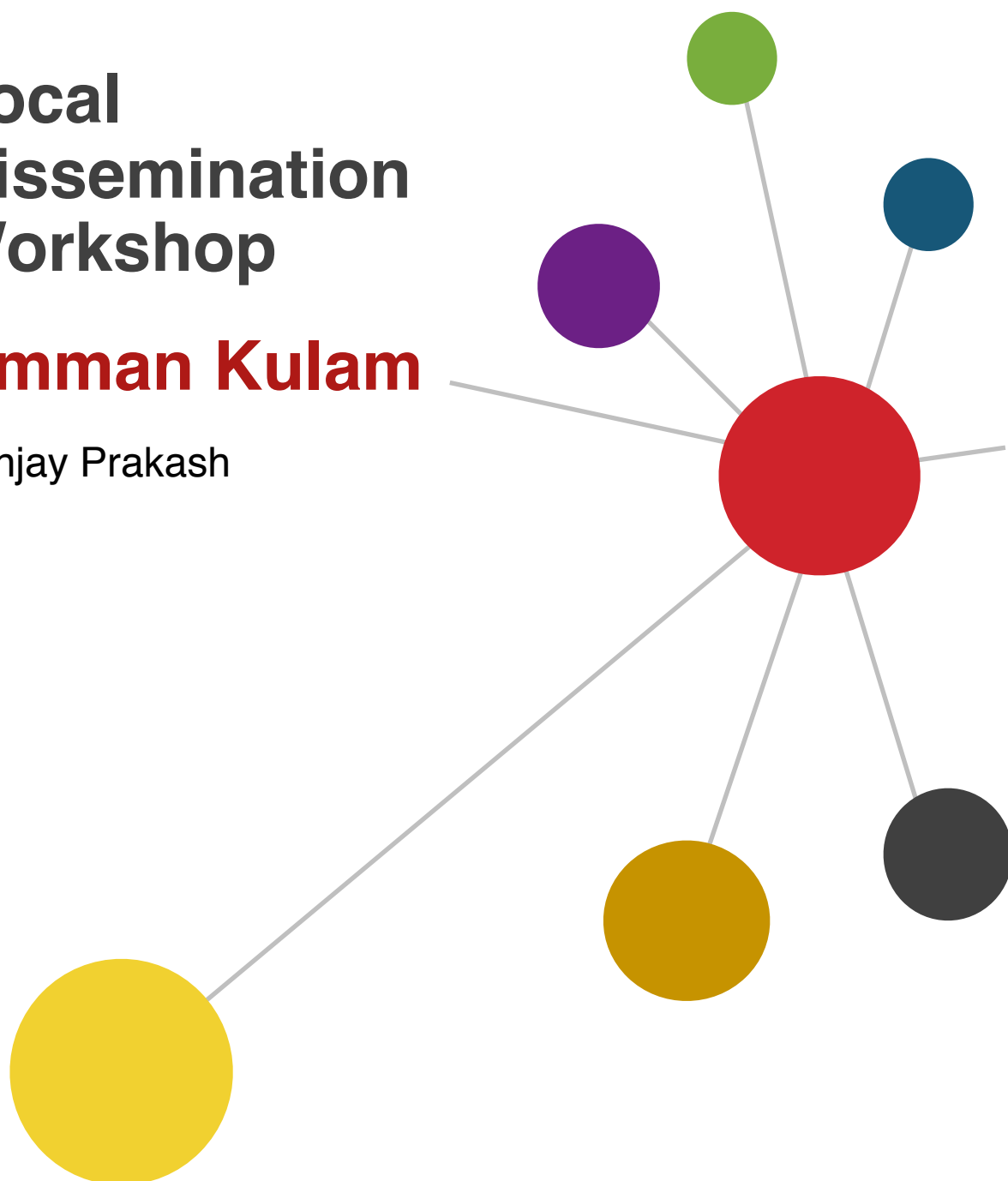


**Local
Dissemination
Workshop**

At

Amman Kulam

Sanjay Prakash



The Local dissemination Workshop was conducted by Karpagam Academy of Higher Education (KAHE) on 24th February 2017 at the AmmanKulam Housing Unit, which is a typical example of a slum Resettlement Project in Coimbatore. The intention of the workshop was to spread awareness amongst the stakeholders about Binucom project and serve as a trust building exercise for initiating dialogue between the colony dwellers and the Binucom team.

The workshop was conducted as an event based on the theme of “Health & Sanitation” as it was considered to be need of the hour in resettlement colonies all over the city. It was designed to be an interactive programme that would involve the colony residents in an informal manner instead of a formal approach within closed doors. The programme was executed jointly by the students of the Faculty of Architecture and Alumnus of the Master of Social Services, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, and was conducted in the common space of the housing unit itself. The chief participants were the residents of the colony and the local self-help group.

The first part of the event was a short skit that focused on the importance of maintaining a clean environment and the hazards of open defecation. The play was enacted as a moral story which was inspired from the day to day lives of these very residents. It operated as both, a tool of awareness and a form of entertainment that drew the attention of the people. The informal approach was exemplified by assigning simple tasks to the audience to

promote interaction and the use of colloquial language.

The second part involved a short briefing session wherein the objective of Binucom and the purpose of the study was put forth to the people. This was followed by a dialogue between the research team and the residents regarding their grievances. Major complaints from the residents were (i) lack of tenements for about three hundred households which had been relocated from ValanKulam (ii) small size of dwelling unit (iii) renting of the apartments (iv) poor infrastructural maintenance (water supply, street lighting and Garbage disposal) (v) commuting difficulties (vi) lack of social infrastructural amenities like community hall, night school, libraries etc. and (vii) Poor responsiveness of the government in addressing basic complaints.

The workshop was the first step towards the development of a working relationship between the users and the research team. It served as a platform through which the inhabitants could voice their perspective about the government and its capacity in providing them with a home. The exercise also proved useful in building contacts with many other organisations like the youth wing and the colony association. Despite the participation of many dwellers, there was still a small section of the residents who were hesitant to express their woes. This, however, could be offset by conducting many more events. Overall the workshop was a veritable event which has ensured the research team an unrestricted access to the Amman Kulam housing unit in the future.

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Co-ordinators Meeting BInUCom 2017

Ainsley Lewis

The annual co-ordinator meeting for the BInUCom project was held in Krems in Austria in the last week of February and the first week of March 2017. The intent of this was two-fold, one to resolve several issues in the administrative protocols of the BInUCom Project and to meet up with partners of the SES team from Ethiopia. Martina Friedrich, who was at the Kick off meeting a year ago, was present during this meeting to address administrative issues raised by all the partners of the BInUCom project.

Besides the discussions on the BInUCom project, Martina gave us insights about two other programs funded by the European Union. Horizon 20:20, that is purely a research Grant and Erasmus Mundus, a two year joint masters program, with two European partners and a third partner. These discussions gave all the partners of the BInUCom program the confidence to strive for, other research

and masters programs funded by the European Union.

The purchase of equipment to examine quantitative and qualitative data integral to the research for the case studies of the BInUCom program was a pending issue and needed some resolution. This was debated upon at length. The most important aspect of this discussion was for the European Union to move away from its set norms so as to recognise that each institute has its own set of protocols for administration and that it was impractical/impossible to have a single supplier for such a diverse list of equipment.

With the administrative issues resolved, we then had fruitful presentations and discussions about the ongoing work in the BInUCom program.

Darshini Mahadevia, the co-ordinator from CUE, CEPT presented on The Urban Planning Conundrum in India.



Connecting continents: Team BInUCom with team SES at Danube University Campus, Krems, Austria

Ainsley Lewis the Co-ordinator from KRVIA presented about the courses conducted in the institute under the aegis of BInUCom for the Undergraduate and Masters program. At the Undergraduate level the Allied Design course at the final year level conducted by Hussain Indorewala, looked at the various national housing policies. This course was run parallel to the Housing studio in the Final year at the undergraduate level that made the students critique the existing re development policy for Dharavi. This simultaneous engagement in both courses brought a degree of awareness about policy issues and the changes that need to be incorporated in the Dharavi redevelopment plan and the Development Control Rules for this informal settlement.

At the Masters Level the housing studio looked at the possibilities of engaging with various stakeholders to formulate a local area plan. Along with the design studio, Mamta Patwardan, Shweta Wagh, Abhijit Ekbote and Hussain Indorewala

conducted electives based on their respective case studies.

The work of both these studios were exhibited at the institute in December 2016, during the annual program that focused on Housing. This exhibition served as a method to disseminate information about informal settlements and the inferences of both the studios. Several architects, planners, policy makers, locals as well as students from other institutes visited the exhibition.

The highlight of this meeting in Krems, was the interaction with Ethiopian partners who are undertaking a project entitled “Social Inclusion and Energy Management in Informal Settlements” (SES) with its aim to improve higher education for architects and urban planners to enable them to deal with the complex challenges of sustainable social housing in Ethiopia.

The following schools from different cities of Ethiopia are partners of this program EiABC, Addis Ababa, UoG (University of Gondar), Gondar and UoM (University of Mekelle), Mekelle.

Darshini Mahadevia of CEPT University in Ahmedabad, India, presented a holistic methodology for slum free city planning.

Yonas Alemayehu Soressa of the Ethiopian Institute for Architecture, Building Construction and City Development (EiABC) in Addis Ababa gave a general overview on housing in present day Ethiopia.

Dawit Benti of the Ethiopian Institute for Architecture, Building Construction and City Development (EiABC) in Addis Ababa portrayed the country's current state of Higher Education in Architecture and Planning.

The most interesting program of the day was the World Cafe Session. This session comprised of three twenty minute rounds of conversation between the four partner cities of BInUCom and three partner cities of SES . Though twenty minutes was far too short a time for each of us to get an idea of the others city, this semi formal format of presentation provided ample opportunities for dialogue and question. The city resume prepared by each of the partners highlighted issues of the city with regard to policy and the status and condition of the informal housing sector.

The next day back in the seminar room presentations were made by Architect

Valerie Seitz who gave an overview on the idea of the development of the Pomali co-housing project in the nearby village of Oberwölbling. She highlighted various aspects of community dwelling adopted by a group of families and the regulations they lay down so as to encourage the same.

Social Entrepreneur and Ashoka-fellow, Martin Hollinetz presented the idea of Otelo, the "Open Technology Labs": driven by civil society engagement they offer space for discussion and exchange on societal topics as well as creative and technological innovations.

Oliver Danninger, Energy and Environment Agency of Lower Austria (ENU), extensively informed participants about the efforts to promote E-mobility by providing the necessary infrastructure. The efforts that were made to provide for the charging of the cars and the developments in technology to increase the efficiency of the vehicle so that it becomes the popular choice of the urban consumer. An E-car car was available for the participants to test ride on the Krems Campus.

Nagaraju Kaja from SAP Vijaywada, presented about the case studies being undertaken in Vijaywada. Ainsley Lewis presented about the courses conducted and their outcomes to the SES partners. This presentation was appreciated as the SES partners saw the complexity of the issues that the students of KRVIA were exposed to.

All these presentations to the Ethiopian partners highlighted the need for dialogue so as to learn from each other's experiences. In spite of the several differences between the two countries, there were various issues in the urban landscape related to housing that were similar. Besides forging new relationships across continents there seems to be a lot of possibilities for exchange of ideas and capacity building between all the institutes owing to the vast production of knowledge.

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