

PRESS RELEASE
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EMERGENCY ARCHITECTS AUSTRALIA- Ngari Community High School: 2011 Australian Timber Design Awards winner in the category of Australian Designed International Project

Emergency Architects Australia (EAA) is proud to announce that the Ngari Community High School project has been awarded a 2011 Timber Design Award in the category of Australian Designed International Project. This project is the result of the efforts of a large group of volunteers and community members, including architects, labourers, engineers and many others.

Our greatest gratitude and thanks must go to all those community members who labored on or supported the project. Without their desire to build back better, provide better health outcomes and elevate educate to the highest priority for their children, these projects would never have been built. Their belief in rebuilding their communities through their own action has helped them put the disaster behind them. RARP has continued to assist communities with the school reconstruction program so that most of the Western Province schools that were destroyed are now rebuilt.

Project Description:

This community-run project consists of a classroom, two dormitories, a mess hall and a teacher's house. All buildings have been constructed using local hardwoods by local volunteer labour, with a majority of the trees purchased from families located within close proximity to the school site. All the trees were milled by hand, using a chainsaw and a local operator, using cutting list as to ensure that each tree was cut as efficiently as possible.

The use of timber construction allowed local carpenters to utilise skills which they already had, as well as learning new design principles to mitigate risk in this earthquake prone location. This rural location without electricity meant all the buildings were constructed using handsaws, chisels, and hammers with a limited use of a generator and electric tools. Three types of timber were used; Vasa (*Vitex cofassus*), which is a dense timber, was used for the main structural and exposed components. Buni (*Calophyllum vitiense*) and Gema (*Pometia pinnata*), which are lighter hardwoods were used for the framing and cladding.

The main design principals of each building consists of a strong base, through a post, bearer, and cross bracing construction, with studs, noggins, and trusses, all structurally tied together with bracing, forming the skeleton of each building. Each detail where timber meets timber is notched out and half housed to create strong junctions throughout. The framing is then clad with vertically run timber boards and battens which again bind the structure together further.

In collaboration with the local carpenters, the window design was an important part of the overall design of the buildings. Three of the buildings have fixed louvered shutters, which open outwards on a top pivot point. Prototypes were mocked up to ensure that the finalised design allowed for the most efficient use of timber. This level of refinement of the design ensured that each window brought light and ventilation into the internal spaces, as well as offering a robust and easy system to construct.



Team:

We would like to thank the volunteers who made the Ngari Community High School and this award possible. They include:

Ngari Community High School- Stage 2 (10 months)

Project Director/ Program Architect- David Kaunitz

Project Architect- Richard Briggs

Construction Administrator- Vicki Hon Briggs

Program Director for Reconstruction and Recovery Project- Jon Boveington (RARP)

Local Carpenters- John Querso, Davison, Timo Kura, Muke Roger, Michael Vavu

Ngari Community High School- Stage 1 (3 months)

Project Director: Guy Luscombe

Project Manager/Architect - Robbie Dodds, David Kaunitz

Administrator- Fatima Touati

Construction Assistant- Erin Foley

Funded by: Agence Francaise de Developpment (AFD), Architectes de l'urgence (AUF),

Standard Schools Design program

MEHRD Infrastructure Advisors – PCRU/Infrastructure Unit - Peter Braun (EU-Stabex), Antoinette Wickham (MEHRD)

MEHRD Stage 2 coordinators– Lency Olitisa, Peter Potter and Dulcie Sito

Program Director for Reconstruction and Recovery Project (RARP); Jon Boveington and Sharon Wright

Rapid Assessment: Patrick Coulombel (Architectes de l'urgence), Nielsen Warren

EAA Program directors- Guy Luscombe, Andrea Nield, David Kaunitz

EAA School program design and drawing team - Poppy Becerra, Sandra Behrendt, James Davidson, Damian Eckersley, Jo Evans, Nicolas Ewald, Ross Feller, Barry Gibbon, Shi Ing Goh, Tricia Helyar, David Kaunitz, Joseph Loh, Guy Luscombe, Grace McKeller, Andrea Nield, David Rapaport, Roderick Simpson

Structural Advice- Paul Ofea (AMA Solomon Islands), Ruth Kesterman & Kimberley Pepperell (ARUP), Stephen Maher & Rodney Pratt & Jamie Sheldon (Northrop Engineers), Bruce Hutchison & Rod Johnston (Partnership Housing Australasia), Richard Green (TTW)

Modelmakers: Tricia Helyar, David Rapaport

There were many people who contributed to this project, apologies if we have not captured everyone's names.

Media Partner:

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