

100_introduction

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The thesis is to be read as two parts of a single investigation. Part 1 [chapters 1-5] represents the objective component of the thesis. The chapters address the academic research component of the study. The information gathered supports and informs the approach to the intervention as explored in part 2. Part 2 [chapters 6-10] flows from part 1 in a subjective account of the progression through the design. The reader is guided through a process of the authors investigation, design and ultimate summation with respect to the hypothesis as later outlined.

The thesis is introduced by outlining the problem in broad terms. Thereafter, a brief to approach the problem is conceived. Broad aims and objectives are set in place and a methodology to guide the research is suggested [chapter 1]. The problem is explored in greater depth highlighting the pitfalls to current responses within the

particular scope as well as in cases with similar circumstances. The problem is further unpacked by discerning and classifying problems and addressing them through aims and objectives, further building on the brief [chapter 2].

The research methodology presents a way forward, which is then, pursued in subsequent chapters, gathering and scrutinizing information to best dictate a comprehensive response [chapters 3 4 and 5]. The culmination of influential factors - historical, social, economic as well as theoretical responses relative to architecture are then applied to a site analysis [chapter 6] to come up with an appropriate response [chapter 7].

A design framework is proposed that counteracts the impacts of the impending displacement. Within the framework, a specific design intervention is focused on [i.e. the hotel retreat].

There in, the concept is developed as guided by site-specific constraints and opportunities as well as external factors such as current architectural theory and global approaches to development. And finally, through refinement and technical resolution [chapter 9], the design explores contextually applicable materials, climatic responses and sustainable servicing interventions. The ultimate eventuality being to assess this outcome against the initial objectives [Later outlined in chapter 2].

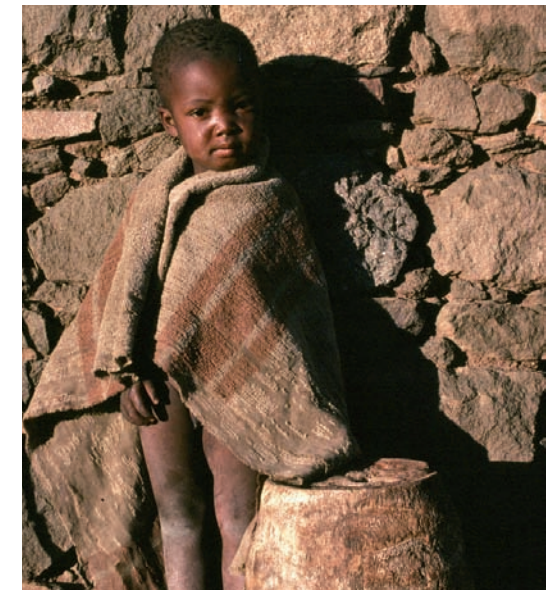


Figure 004. [RIGHT
“Lesotho boy”

Development in the third world has resulted in hardship for many people. Historically, colonization has been the main force behind this hardship, where oppressive structures and exploitation have crippled underdeveloped nations, forcing them to try to catch up with their first-world counterparts. In this endeavour, diplomatic ties have facilitated funding to develop impoverished countries and bridge the divide between the first and third worlds. More often than not, common gain is in the interest of both the developed and developing nation. One such initiative is the Lesotho Highlands Water Project [later referred to as LHWP], a collaborative project embarked on by the governments of Lesotho and South Africa. Ground-breaking in magnitude, this first-of-its-kind project proposes a series of dams in Lesotho that would supply water to South Africa and hydro electric power to Lesotho.

The project is primarily funded by the World Bank, which funds are then used to develop the water rich, yet underdeveloped nation of Lesotho [LHWP project overview, 2009].

However, in the midst of this development, the people of the Highlands where the dams are located are negatively impacted, and threads of culture and community have become displaced in this ever-urbanizing fabric.

Marginalized rural communities are forsaken and their identity is lost. As a consequence, people of rural areas have fallen victim to an urban lifestyle characterized by a struggle for economic sustainability. It has therefore become necessary to engage and negotiate the tensions resulting from the transition from the rural to the global. This can be achieved through an architecture that is true to the region.

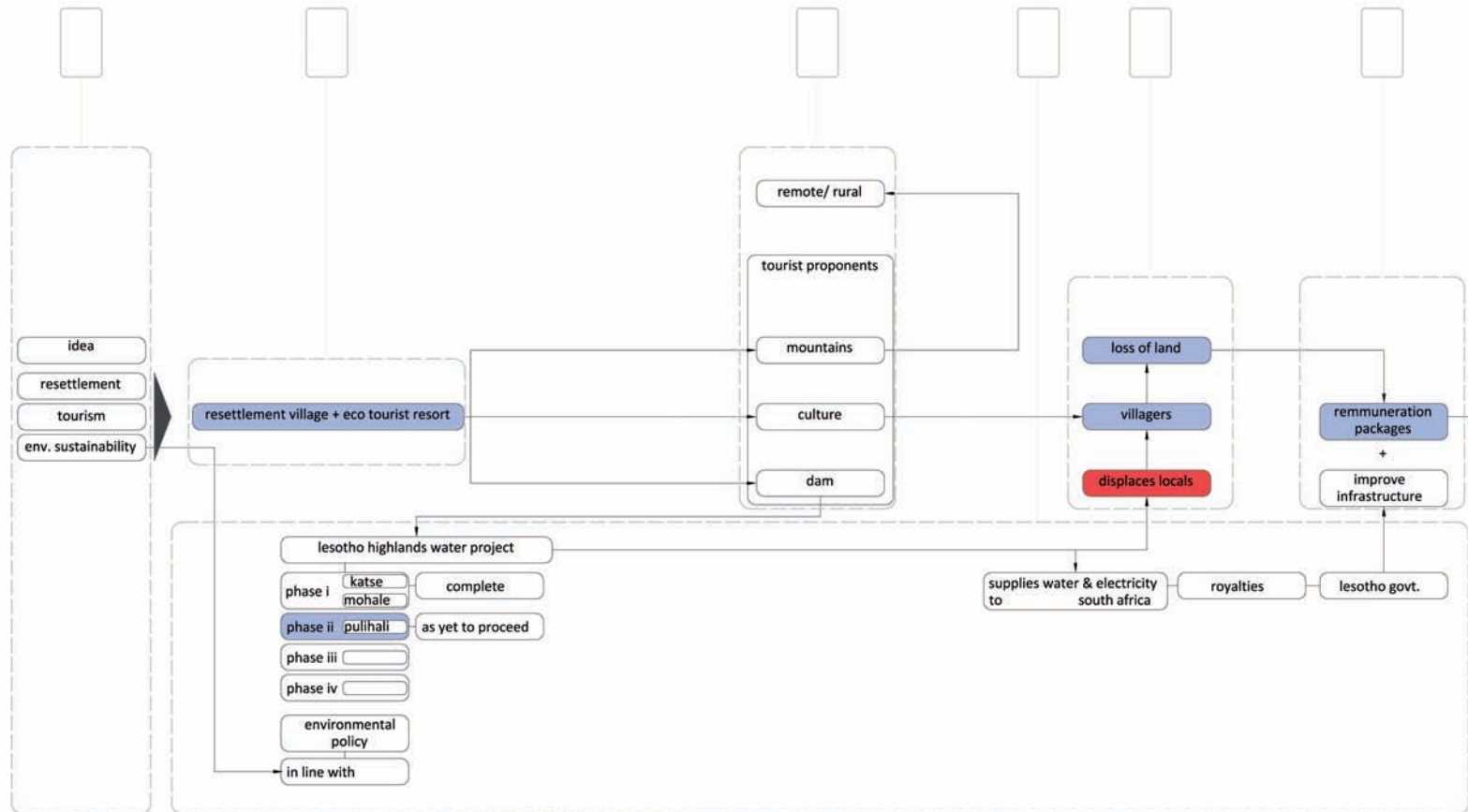
The thesis focuses on a number of communities which, to varying degrees, are affected by the building of a dam, resulting in their environment being inevitably transformed. Compelled to adjust, these communities are left few options. It is the opinion of the author that current frameworks implemented for relocation and compensation are inappropriate and an alternative is thus proposed.



103 Brief/ response

Propose a development framework that coincides with the development of the dam and counteracts the displacement of the local people. Design, as a response to the dam development, an intervention that sustains and enriches the way in which the local people adapt to their new circumstances.

Figure 005. [LEFT] "Katse Dam at dusk"



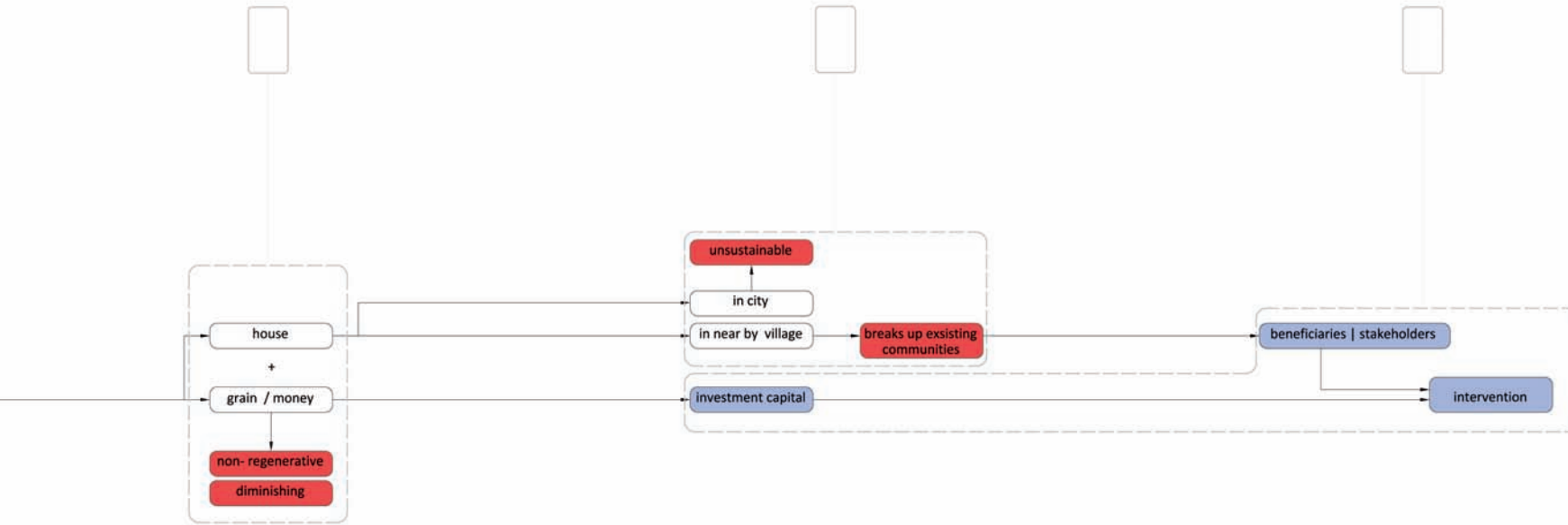


Figure 006. [ABOVE]
 “mind map” outlining the situation where the circumstances as highlighted in the background and context are experienced and the possible avenue for intervention

105 Aims and objectives

The project aims to remunerate locals through a process-driven initiative that occurs concurrently with the construction of the dam. The objective is to have the community act collectively in negotiating a reinvention of their village – a reinvention that takes their sense of belonging and their cultural values into consideration. This would result in a village that refocuses resources and the current lifestyle of the people to align with the change in their environment.

The objective is to reconcile tradition and progress, and turn the threat posed by the development of the dam into an opportunity.

106 Problem statement

How can development incorporate and remunerate the local peoples of rural environments to sufficiently empower them to make decisions that cultivate and enrich their environments and in the process allow them to develop an architectural language with an honest vernacular?

107 Research Methodology

|Analysis|

Site, locals through interviews and consultation, historical context, theoretical premise and precedent studies

|Synthesis|

Information pertinent to comprehensive evaluation of parameters of project

|Design guidelines|

Clearly defined influential elements that inform the design

|Intervention|

Approach to unraveling highlighted problems through established criterion

|Implementation|

Pragmatic application of all research complied