

Design for the Children: East African HIV/AIDS Clinic Design Competition

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Design for the Children hosted an international design competition in Fall 2008 to promote the health of East African mothers and children and help prevent treatable diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis and HIV through the construction of non-profit clinics in the region.

This competition entry chose to focus on how the architecture and planning of the clinic could best solve the problem of social stigmas associated with mothers receiving HIV anti-retroviral treatment to prevent transmission to their unborn children.

A specific strategy is needed for the delivery of both a localized need (anti-retroviral treatment) and a larger idea (education/prevention) for the East African region and the African continent as a whole. The natural self-organization and self-similarity of fractal geometry is the strategic means in connecting the small and the large. By building the clinic in a small rural village and allowing the local residents to interact and take part in building, treating, and teaching, a seed is planted that is then able to spread to other villages. Collectively, this network begins to change the future of HIV/AIDS in Africa.

The design of the buildings is uniquely tied to providing the necessary medications involved in HIV/AIDS prevention. Market places, gardens and schools are both functional elements of the community and also serve as a guise for treatment. By giving HIV positive mothers a separate reason to visit the clinic, treatments can be continued without the risk of being ostracized by the community.

Designing and building recursive rural clinics that are able to branch out and spread education and treatment is crucial in the battle against HIV/AIDS.

Travis Herret graduated with a master's in Architecture in May 2009. He worked in conjunction with Professors Donna Cohen and Nancy Clark in Graduate Studio 3.

