***[un]* Shaded Territories:** a design for women empowerment in rural Pakistan.

by

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Master of Architecture

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

fig.i Flag ceremony at Ganda Singh Wala border

Abstract

The separation between Pakistan and India in 1947 was a direct result of the struggle between two different religious groups in the region; Hindus, and Muslims. Of all the provinces split, Punjab was the only one province that was split between the two nations. This division caused one of the biggest migrations in history, affecting about 10 million people.[1] People left behind their homes, their lives, and beloved religious buildings to start fresh in a new, unknown land. This intermingling of people at the time of the partition, resulted in a displaced variety of cultural and religious practices.

To this day, Punjab's rural population suffers from caste system marriages, female infanticide, and oppression of women, including a lack of educational opportunities for females. Many rural families believe that if their women are educated, social risk can rise. In some cases, these ancient cultural traditions are mistakenly thought to be religious obligations.

77.1% of Kasur district's population lives in rural areas and 47.64% of Kasur's population is female.[2] Of the rural female population, only 32.7% are literate, compared to 55.2% of the males.[3] More than half of the female population in Kasur is thus deprived of an education as a result, and many are married at a young age with expectations to start a family. These young women cannot read or write the language they speak, and many become victims of domestic violence.

A design for a skill development institution is suggested to address the social, cultural and economical challenges faced by the impoverished female population of rural Punjab, Pakistan. The proposal is situated in the town of Kasur with a program aimed at teaching independence.

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I had the privilege to work with a wonderful team of professors whose thoughtful insight and continuous support kept enriching the thesis every step along the way.

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Lastly, to the beautiful people of Kasur who willingly shared with me their heart-warming stories and for letting me into their lives.

For the women who have made me who I am;
Daadijaan, Amijee & Amijaan

There are two powers in the world;
one is the sword and the other is the pen.
There is a great competition and rivalry between the two.
There is a third power stronger than both, that of the women.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah
[Founder of Pakistan]

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Glossary

Ahmadi:/ɑːhmʌðiː/sect of Islam.

Brahmin:/brɑːhmʌn/caste of priests in Hinduism.
Baithak:/beɪthʌk/entertaining space for guests in traditional housing usually used by men of the house.
Baji:/bɑːdʒiː/a term used to show respect towards an older sister or a sister figure.

Dan:/ðɑːn/gift.
Dar-ul-aman:/ðɑːr-ʊl-ʌmɑːn/name of shelter home.
Dar-ul-Aman-Drul-o-Atfal:/ ðɑːr-ʊl-ʌmɑːn-ðrʊl-ɔː-ʌθfɑːl /name of shelter home.
Dastak:/ðʌsθʌk /name of shelter home.

Haq Bakhshwan:/hʌk bʌkhʃwɑːn /nuptials between a woman and the Qur'an.
Holi:/hɔːliː /Hindu spring festival.

Jalebi:/dʒʌleɪbiː/deep fried dessert made of sugar syrup
Jamiat-i-Hamayat-i-Islam:/dʒʌmiːʌθ-eə-hʌmɑːjʌθ-eə-ɪslɑːm/ name of shelter home.

Kammi:/kʌm-miː/ craftsman.
Kanya:/kʌnjɑː/young girl, virgin girl.
Kanyadana:/kʌnjɑːðɑːnɑ/gift of a girl.
Kari:/kɑːriː/disreputable woman.
Karo:/kɑːrɔː/disreputable man.
Khul:/khʊl/Islamic term for the right of a woman to seek divorce from her husband.
Kot:/kɔːt/ small forts or fortified hamlets.
Kshatriyas:/kʌʃʌθriːjɑː/caste of warriors and administrators in Hinduism.
Kush:/kʊʃ/son of Lord Rama, the seventh avatar of the Hindu God, Vishnu.

Lava/Loh:/lɑːvɑː/lɔːh/son of Lord Rama, the seventh avatar of the Hindu God, Vishnu.

Mahr:/mɑːhr/mandatory wedding gift given by the groom to his wife. It can be monetary or in the form of possessions.

Pashmina:/pʌʃmiːnɑː/fine type of cashmere wool made from Himalayan goat hair.
Pashtun:/pʌʃθuːn/people of an Indo-European ethnicity mainly populating areas in Afghanistan and northern parts of Pakistan.
Purdah:/pʌrðɑːh/religious and social practice of seclusion of females from men. It can be spatial seclusion or veiling as part of an attire.

Qasoor: /kʌsu:r/ plural of the Arabic word *Qasr*.
Qasr: /kʌsr/ Arabic word meaning castle.

Rama: /ra:ma:/ seventh avatar of the Hindu God, Vishnu.
Ramadan: /ra:ma:ða:n/ ninth month in the Islamic calendar. It is considered a Holy month for Muslims in which they fast from dawn to dusk everyday for the complete month.

Shiite: /ʃi:aɪt/ sect of Islam.
Shirk: /ʃɪrk/ refers to the sin of associating partners to Allah. It can be the form of idol-worshipping or polytheism.
Shudras: /ʃuðra:/ lowest caste in the Hindu *varna* system. Caste of peasants and servants.
Sunni: /sun-ni/ sect of Islam.
Swara: /swa:ra:/ tribal custom where young girls are forced to marry men of another tribe to end feuds.

Vaishya: /veʃi:ja:/ caste of farmers, cattle herders, artisans, and businesspeople in Hinduism.
Vanni: /va:n-ni:/ tribal custom where young girls are forced to marry men of another tribe to end feuds.

Watta Satta: /vʌt-ta: sʌt-ta:/ nuptials where families marry their daughter and son to a son and daughter of another family.

Zamindar: /zʌmi:nða:r/ landowner.

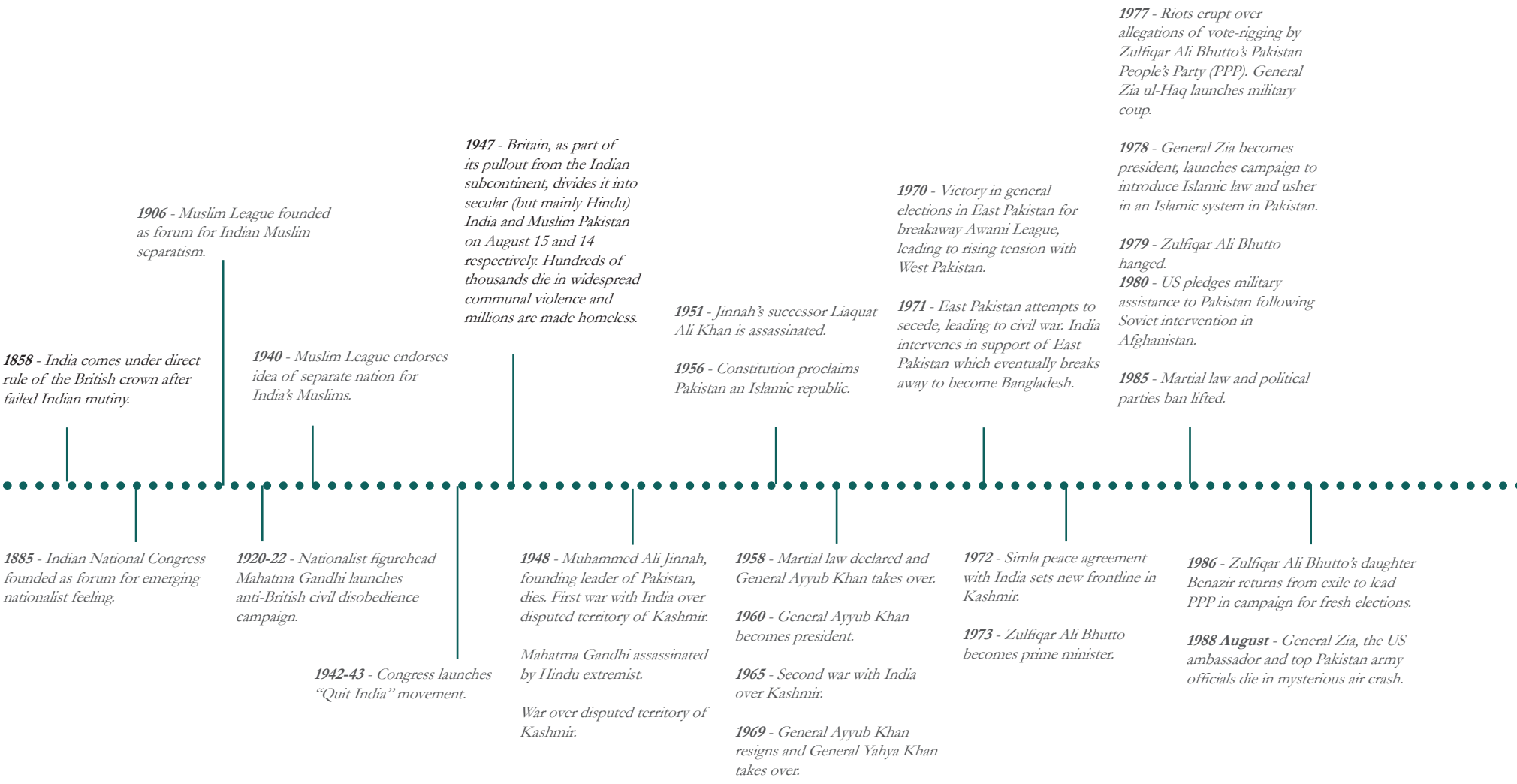


fig.ii Timeline of key events in Pakistan's history and current political affairs

1988 November *- Benazir Bhutto's PPP wins general election.*

1990 *- Benazir Bhutto dismissed as prime minister on charges of incompetence and corruption.*

1991 *- Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif begins economic liberalisation programme. Islamic Shariah law formally incorporated into legal code.*

1992 *- Government launches campaign to stamp out violence by Urdu-speaking supporters of the Mohajir Qaumi Movement.*

1993 *- President Khan and Prime Minister Sharif both resign under pressure from military. General election brings Benazir Bhutto back to power.*

1996 *- President Leghari dismisses Bhutto government amid corruption allegations.*

1997 *- Nawaz Sharif returns as prime minister after his Pakistan Muslim League party wins elections.*

1999 April *- Benazir Bhutto and her husband convicted of corruption and given jail sentences. Ms Bhutto stays out of the country.*
1999 May *- Kargil conflict: Pakistan-backed forces clash with the Indian military in the icy heights around Kargil in Indian-held Kashmir. More than 1,000 people are killed on both sides.*
1999 October *- General Pervez Musharraf seizez power in coup.*

2000 April *- Nawaz Sharif sentenced to life imprisonment on hijacking and terrorism charges over his actions to prevent the 1999 coup.*
2000 December *- Nawaz Sharif goes into exile in Saudi Arabia after being pardoned by military authorities.*

2001 June *- Gen Pervez Musharraf names himself president while remaining head of the army.*
2001 September *- Musharraf swings in behind the US in its fight against terrorism and supports attacks on Afghanistan. US lifts some sanctions imposed after Pakistan's nuclear tests in 1998.*
2001 December *- India, Pakistan prompt fears of full-scale war by massing troops along common border amid growing tensions over Kashmir following suicide attack on Indian parliament.*

2002 January *- President Musharraf bans two militant groups - Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad - and takes steps to curb religious extremism.*
2002 April *- President Musharraf wins another five years in office in a referendum criticised as unconstitutional and flawed.*

2003 November *- Pakistan declares a Kashmir ceasefire; India follows suit.*

2004 June *- Pakistan mounts first military offensive against suspected Al-Qaeda militants and their supporters in tribal areas near Afghan border. US begins using drone strikes to target Al-Qaeda leaders in the area.*

2005 August *- Pakistan tests its first nuclear-capable cruise missile.*
2005 October *- Earthquake kills tens of thousands of people in Pakistani-administered Kashmir.*
2006 September *- Government signs peace accord to end fighting with pro-Al-Qaeda militants in Waziristan tribal areas near Afghan border.*

2007 February *- Sixty-eight passengers are killed by bomb blasts and a blaze on a train travelling between the Indian capital New Delhi and the Pakistani city of Lahore.*
2007 July *- Security forces storm the militant-occupied Red Mosque complex in Islamabad following a week-long siege.*
2007 October *- Ex-prime minister Benazir Bhutto returns from exile.*
2007 November *- Former PM Nawaz Sharif returns from exile.*
2007 December *- State of emergency lifted. Benazir Bhutto assassinated at political rally at election campaign rally in Rawalpindi.*

2008 September *- MPs elect Pakistan People's Party's (PPP) Asif Ali Zardari - the widower of assassinated former PM Benazir Bhutto - president.*
2008 November *- The government borrows billions of dollars from the International Monetary Fund to overcome its spiralling debt crisis.*

2009 February *- Government agrees to implement Sharia law in north-western Swat valley in effort to persuade Islamist militants there to agree to permanent ceasefire.*

2010 August *- Worst floods in 80 years kill at least 1,600 people and affect more than 20 million.*

2011 January *- A campaign to reform Pakistan's blasphemy law leads to the killing of two prominent supporters, Punjab Governor Salman Taseer in January, and Minorities Minister Shahbaz Bhatti in March.*
2011 April *- The founder of Al-Qaeda, Osama bin Laden, is killed by American special forces in Abbottabad.*

2012 September *- Muslim cleric Khalid Chishti is arrested on suspicion of planting burnt pages of the Koran on a Christian girl briefly detained for blasphemy. Amid widespread condemnation of the case against the girl at home and abroad, a court dropped it November.*
2012 October *- Taliban gunmen seriously injure 14-year-old campaigner for girls' rights Malala Yousafzai, whom they accused of "promoting secularism". The shooting sparked a brief upsurge of anger in Pakistan against the militants.*
2012 November *- Taliban suicide bomber kills at least 23 people at a Shia Muslim procession in the Rawalpindi.*

2013 June *- Parliament approves Nawaz Sharif as prime minister after his Muslim League-N wins parliamentary elections in May. Taliban conduct systematic campaign of attacks and intimidation, but fail to deter largest turnout of voters since 1970.*
2013 September *- More than 80 people are killed in a double suicide bombing at a church in Peshawar. It is the deadliest attack so far against Christians in Pakistan. Taliban-linked Islamists claim responsibility.*

2014 February *- Former president Pervez Musharraf goes on trial on treason charges.*
2014 May *- A Pakistani woman was killed by her relatives outside Lahore High Court for marrying against their wishes. Police said 30-year-old Farzana Bibi died on the spot after being attacked with bricks and sticks.*

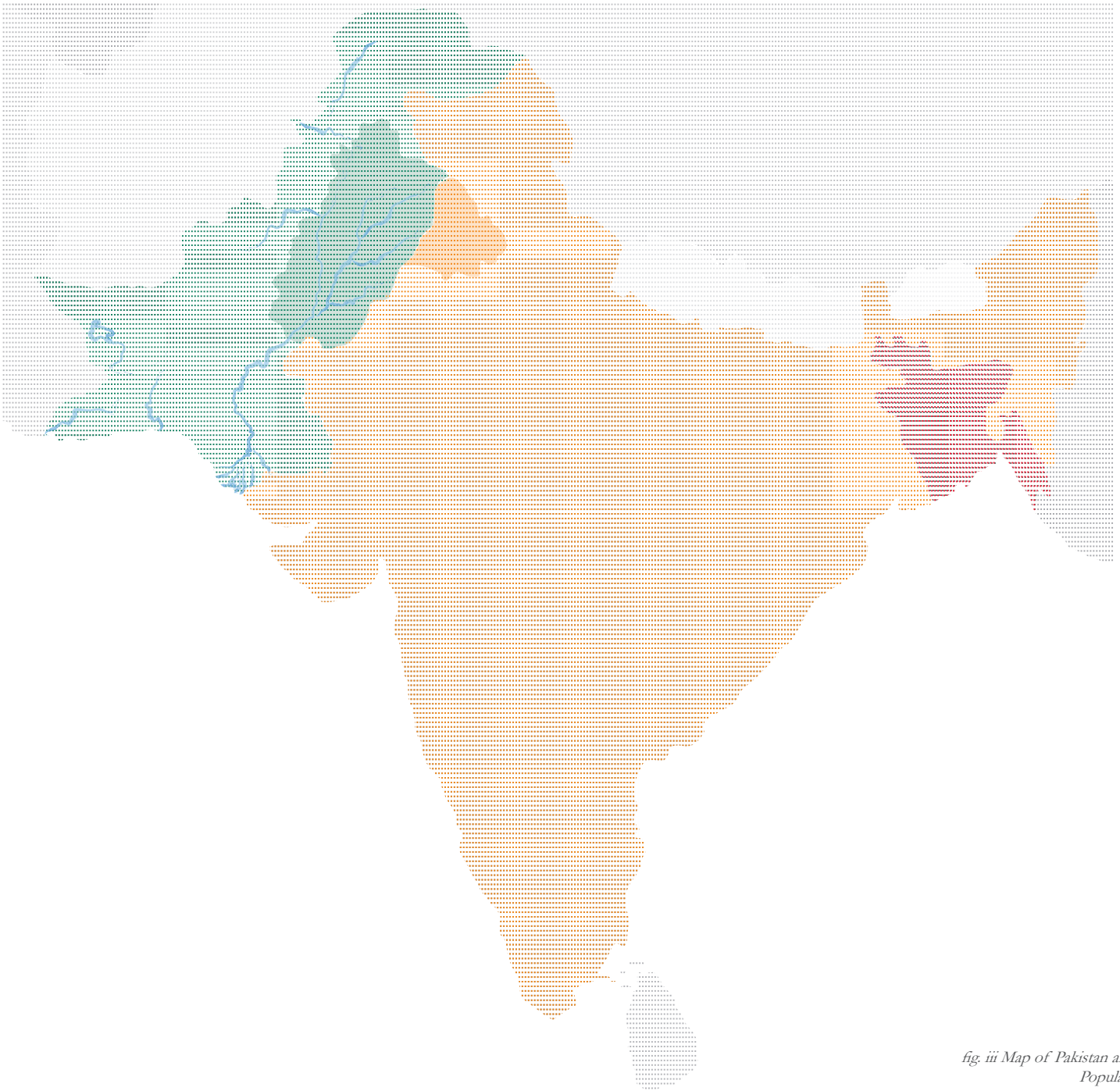


fig. iii Map of Pakistan and its neighbouring countries
Population of Pakistan: 179 million
[not to scale]

fig. iv Map of Punjab split between Pakistan and India
Highlighted area: Kasur District
[not to scale]

fig.1 Girl outside her house in Kasur city

Introduction

Her eyes lit up as she heard the word jalebi come out of my mouth.
"Jalebi, I'll bring you jalebi every night if you learn how to count to ten with me."
She agreed excitedly in hopes for getting a warm, sweet jalebi for dessert after dinner every night.

I hoped for her to learn how to read simple numbers.

Domestic violence and violence against women is common in many parts of the world. In the developed world, women are generally supported by law. However, in the developing world, these legal structures are not always in place. Many developing countries have inadequate laws supporting women who are affected by violence, and some regions accept the violent practices as a part of their culture. In other cases, laws may exist but they are not implemented.

This lack of implementation is especially true of Pakistan. In the year 2011, a total number of 8,539 cases of violence against women were reported.[4] But as many cases are unreported, this number is certainly inaccurate.[5]

In order to understand the reasons behind such violent acts against women in Pakistan, one must understand the country's culture, its history, and its people. While analysing the reasons is not meant to be a justification for such crimes, it is vital information for a designer aiming to rectify the situation through architecture.

fig.2 Top 15 districts in Pakistan with highest rate of violence against females

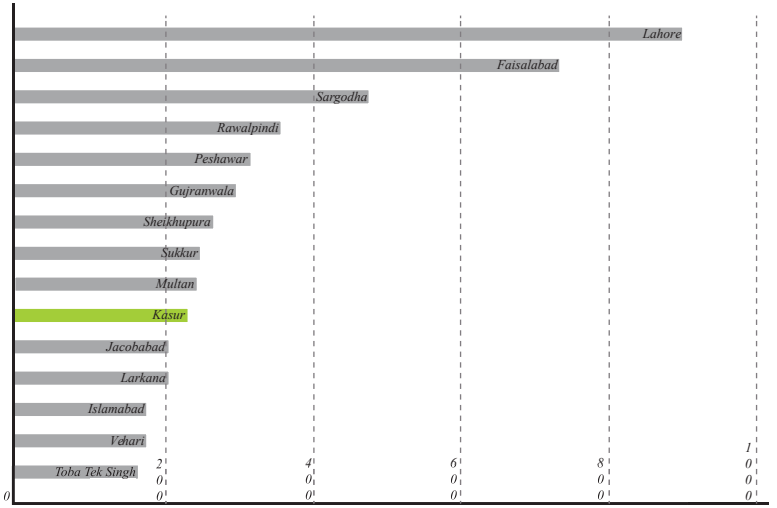


fig.3 Men praying in Bulleh Shah's shrine (famous pious poet)

Religion vs. Culture

One of the main reasons for the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 was that the Muslims wanted to create an independent cultural and religious identity.[6] The Muslims felt the need for a clear distinction between themselves and the Hindus due to conflicts arising from the differing religious practices. Many Hindu religious practices were not condoned by Islamic laws and vice versa, resulting in a constant struggle between the two religious majorities of the Indian subcontinent.

In the Hindu culture, people were split into castes based on their ancestral occupation. As stated in 'The Hindu traditions' by Mark W. Muesse: the four main divisions of this hierarchy are the *Brahmans* (priesthood and intellectuals), the *Kshatriyas* (warriors and administrators), the *Vaishyas* (merchants, farmers and artisans), and the *Shudras* (labourers).[7] Verses from the Hindu text, The Laws of Manu were interpreted to believe that mixing castes in marriage and at times even in social activities would cause sin.[8] A similar concept of social stratification remained in the Muslim converts and migrated with them to Pakistan even though Islam preaches equality amongst all men and women.[9]

The two main labour divisions in Pakistani villages were the '*zamindars*' (landowners) and the '*kammis*' (craftsmen).[10] These two divisions were further distinguished into various family castes. For example, the *kammis* were further divided into castes such as barber, baker, carpenter, potter etc. Belonging to a certain caste determined your status within society. This segregation, in most cases, did not create day-to-day social restrictions amongst the Muslims as it was a borrowed concept from the Hindus. Most people felt a sense of equality and acknowledged that the caste system was not a part of their religion but had become part of the culture.[11]

Apart from caste divisions, the Muslims are also divided by various sects of Islam, with the largest groups being *Sunnis* and *Shiites,* who are further divided into seventy-one other sects.[12] The distinction between the groups may seem minor, but they are

sufficient enough to create antagonism amongst the people.

Another example of a concept borrowed from Hinduism that travelled across the border to Pakistan, is dowry practice. According to The Laws of Manu, part of the criteria to achieve enlightenment is through *kanyadana*.[13] *Kanya,* literally means 'virgin girl' and *dan* means gift. Therefore the practice involves giving a virgin girl as a gift to her husband[14] who is considered to be a form of God.The purpose behind this historical tradition is a way for people to acquire religious merits.[15]

However, over time, the ritual evolved into a gifting method of financially safeguarding a girl's future if her husband were no longer able to provide for her and their children. Nowadays, it has become a way for grooms to demand from the bride's family a certain value of assets depending on his education and social status. This social pressure has fostered the perception of girls as economic liabilities on their families. In traditional houses, a dowry is being accumulated from the day a girl is born into a family. This societal norm poses great pressures particularly on the disadvantaged members of the population. The greed for an expensive dowry is the reason behind many cases of violence against women[16] and cases of female infanticide.

In Islam, there is no concept of dowry. Men are obligated to arrange for a bridal gift of monetary value prior to the wedding. This monetary 'gift' is known as the *mahr*. The purpose behind this custom is to ensure that a girl is an owner of a property in her name. Therefore, if a man chooses to divorce his wife, she is entitled to a valuable asset. If the wife chooses to seek a divorce known as *khul* divorce (a divorce which the husband doesn't wish for) then she must return the money to him.[17]

The tradition of dowry still remains ingrained in the Muslims long after partition and is coupled with the groom's obligation to provide a *mahr*.

Similarly, as a strictly monotheistic religion, Islam prohibits creating visual representations of God.[18] This is regarded as a grave sin known as *shirk*. This ideology is strikingly different from Hinduism where it is common practice to worship idols and images as representation of God.

fig.4 Hierarchy of divisions amongst society

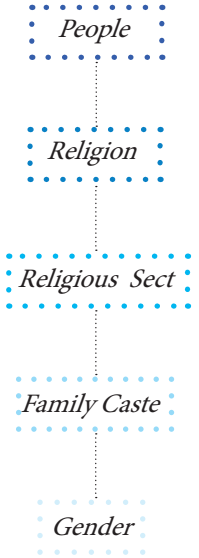
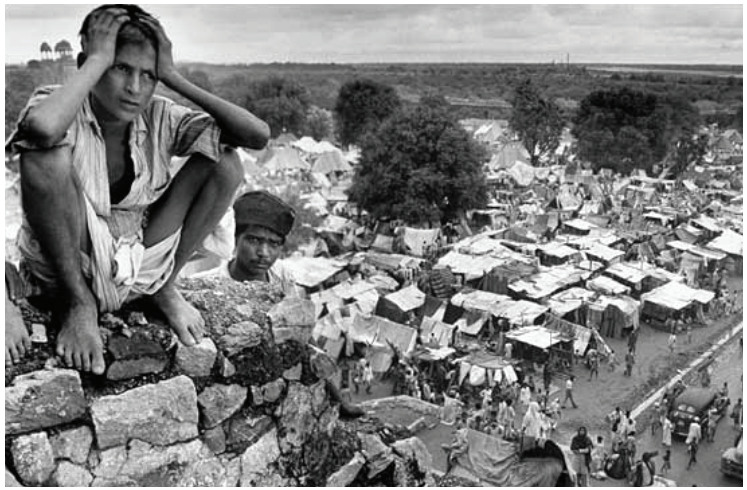


fig.5 Migration at the time of partition

fig.6 A refugee sits on top of the wall of a fortress which was transformed into a refugee camp at the time of partition (below)



Differences such as the above, and others of the like, between the two religions created tension amongst a society with low levels of tolerance for each other.[19] However, increasing populations of Muslims in the Indian subcontinent, in some cases, resulted in the intermingling of people and the blurring of lines between ritual divisions amongst the two faiths. Some people participated in interfaith marriages and many people, particularly those part of the poorer community didn't feel the need to declare or adhere to only one religious faith. Some individuals also celebrated rituals of both faiths such as *Holi* and *Ramadan*.[20]

Even though the earlier Muslims of the subcontinent opposed Hindu beliefs, many Hindu practices like the ones discussed were carried forward because they were deeply rooted in the everyday culture of the region.[21] Thus the division of land, driven by religious intolerance, did not stop people from their routine practices and rituals became part of the culture rather than part of their religion. This population movement resulted in a migration and displacement of culture and religion. The split into three independent nations; Pakistan, India (August 1947) and eventually, Bangladesh (December 1971) created a complicated social and cultural change.[22]

Punjab was the one province of the Indian subcontinent that was divided into two distinct realms during the partition. People were forced to leave their homes and go to the 'other side' depending on their faith, in some cases with their lands split in two, fearing for their fate if they stayed back.[23] The dynamics of a region had suddenly changed despite the obvious similarities of historical cultural practices, visual appearance of the land, people and speech. This split led to one of the biggest cross-cultural migrations of history.[24] The creation of a new identity and nationality over a number of days did not entirely affect the culture. Regional practices were now taken across a new border and adapted to various forms taking on the name of religion and society to create space and justification for them.

The vision of Pakistan was to be a separate land for the Muslims. It is known as a Muslim country which implements variations of Islamic law where possible, but since the country's history is heavily influenced by various religions and culture, there isn't a distinct, singular Pakistani culture. Each of the provinces has its own traditions and cultural practices. However, most cultural traditions are justified by and supported by differing interpretations of Islamic thought.[25]

Man vs. woman

Gender also plays a role in an individual's social status along with religion and family caste. In Pakistani family structure, the power to make important decisions predominantly lies in the hands of the males.[26] This extreme imbalance of male predomination in the power structure, religious biases, caste discrimination coupled with the education and economic situation of the country has created an unfavourable environment for females. This environment plays a significant role in harbouring violence against females in Pakistan.

In Pakistan, as in most developing, religiously conservative countries, women are generally considered inferior members of society.[27] A woman's honour is seen as a family's direct honour. Therefore, the men feel that they are obligated to protect their family's honour by making decisions for the women and young girls.[28]

In "The Haven becomes Hell," Yasmeen Hassan explains that the position of a female in society varies amongst the different provinces of Pakistan. In Punjab and Sindh, for example, women are seen as economic liabilities on their families as the women typically do not financially support the household and have to be given a dowry when married. Whereas, in Kyber Pakhtunkhwa and in Balochistan, women are seen as valuable assets who are sold off in marriage.[29] Even though neither of these views are ideal, they exist amongst traditional households.

This controversial perception of a woman is still very prevalent in rural populations of Pakistan, constituting 67.5% of the total country's population[30] of which only 7.58% is educated past the tenth grade.[31]

In traditional households, many women are discouraged from leaving their houses unaccompanied to avoid risk to their family's honour. A family's honour is considered to be at risk if girls of the family interact with unrelated members of the opposite sex. As a result, young girls are prevented from going to school past the age of puberty. Consequently, generations of uneducated women and children has fostered the acceptance of

fig.7 Women praying in Bulleh Shah's shrine

fig.8 Men sitting at shrine (below)

fig.9 Man and woman sitting outside their home

an inferior social status. This lack of education promotes existing patriarchal values and the oppression of females, in some cases, is wrongly interpreted by extremist Muslim clerics as religious edict.[32]

Another example of a practice justified by narrow interpretation of Islamic thought are Karo-Kari murders, or 'honour' killings that stem from tribal customs. These practices are widely accepted and believed to be sanctioned by Islam as good Muslim men are responsible for keeping a woman's honour intact.[33] This idea of a woman as property is a radical extension of the Islamic ideology of veiling.[34] Women are expected to observe *'purdah'* (veiling) not only because it is advised in Islam but because it was always part of tribal custom and culture. The purpose behind this manifestation is to justify cultural traditions through religion. In turn, it prevents people from standing up against these social stigmas.

Many traditional, Pakistani men feel their position as the head of the household threatened if a young girl is educated and chooses to work. Therefore, the men might use physical violence as an approach to prevent young girls from doing so. Any threat to the family hierarchy causes frustration amongst the men and may result in violence against women.[35]

***

The majority of the Pakistani population follows religion based on ancestral interpretation. Since only 43.92% of the population can read and write in Pakistan,[36] not many are capable of reading or interpreting religious texts. This leaves authority in the hands of a few people who claim that there can only be a single interpretation of religious thought. The people are discouraged from questioning religion as it may be deemed blasphemous.

Laws for punishing acts of intentional disrespect towards religious objects or disrupting religious congregations were implemented in the Indian subcontinent in 1860 by the British rulers at the time and were adopted by Pakistan after the partition. It was also illegal to trespass on burial grounds and ridicule different religious ideologies, either verbally or by physical representation. However, 1980 onwards, numerous clauses divided in two main categories were added as religious offences: the anti-Ahmadi laws and the blasphemy laws.

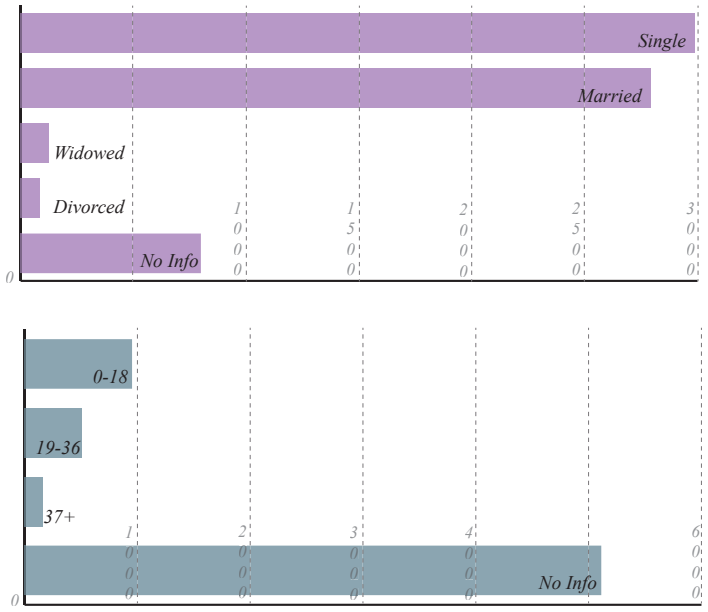
The anti-Ahmadi laws prevent *Ahmadis* from behaving like Muslims and associating themselves with the religion of Islam. The blasphemy laws include clauses that punish disrespectful comments towards historical Islamic figures. Other clauses also include punishment for intentional defacement of the Islamic Holy Book, the Qur'an and disrespecting the Prophet Muhammad. Anyone found guilty of such acts may be at risk of facing death or life imprisonment.

These laws are often stretched by extremist Muslim groups who unnecessarily regard innocent questioning as mockery of the religion.[37] This rigidity and exaggerated view is one of the factors responsible for influencing the minds of many people in Pakistan, especially in rural areas giving them the power to abuse women and religious minorities with the help of religious support.

A woman was set on fire by her husband in Riazabad village Chak 541 G B when she refused to allow him to marry a second time.
Punjab, Faisalabad.
08-02-10

A man threw acid on his second wife Farzana's face when she left his house to stay with her parents after a fight with his first wife. The incident took place while she was sleeping. She was 60% burnt.
Punjab, Rahimyar Khan.
12-11-09

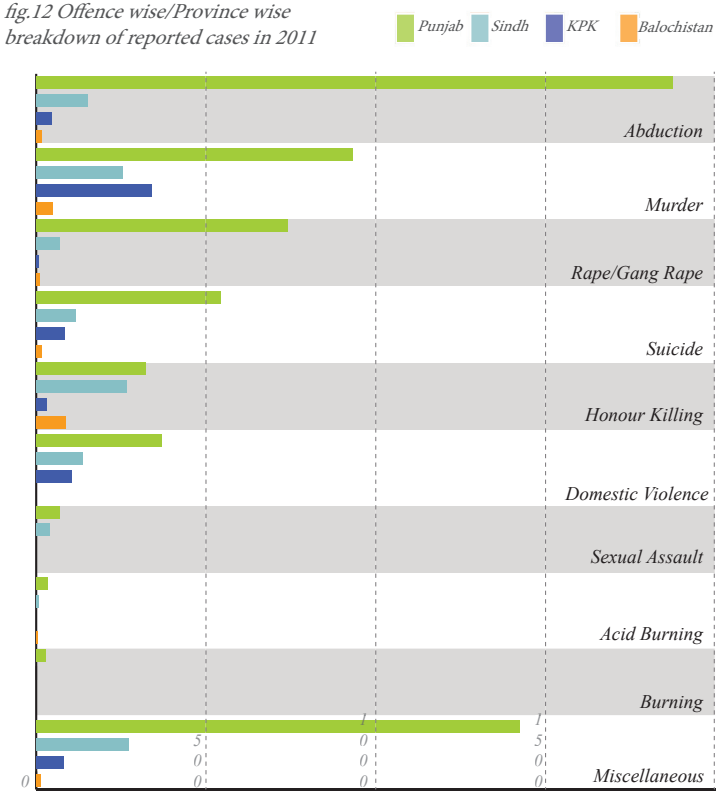
fig.10&11 Marital status and age group of victims of violence cases in 2011



**A merchant, Ahmad Raza, and his wife burnt their 16 year old domestic servant for not heeding their orders. They did not permit her to meet her mother. When she came back after meeting her mother they set her on fire. Punjab, Sheikhupura.*
09-03-10

**Shahzad threw acid on his wife, Shamim' face, causing her severe burns. Shamim's parents had refused to give money to him.*
Punjab, Sargodha.
22-02-10

fig.12 Offence wise/Province wise breakdown of reported cases in 2011



Forms of domestic violence

There are many forms of violence against females practiced in Pakistan.[38] Other than physical abuse, the violence these young, uneducated females face are:

Stove burning: is when stoves have been reported to 'accidentally' blow up due to malfunctioning hardware. Most women affected by this violence are newly wedded brides. Many cases involve the girls' in-laws and the cases are a result of domestic discrepancies.* Many women in India are affected by this abuse for not bringing enough dowry. The custom migrated across the border to Pakistan where, insufficient dowries may be one of the reasons amongst domestic disputes behind the incident.[39]

Acid burning: is one of the most disturbing and shocking forms of violence. Women are scarred and burnt by acid thrown on them. Women who have rejected a marriage proposal are most commonly affected by this violent act. Most victims lose an eye and other facial features, along with the life long trauma and psychological affects of the incident.[40] The disturbing thought behind this heinous act is to deface a woman and her family.[41]

Karo-Kari murders: also known as 'honour killings' are when a man and a woman are killed in the name of honour for committing adultery. Many women are also wrongly accused for humiliating their family and become victims of this violence while the men are allowed to escape. In Sindhi, *Karo* and *Kari* means immoral man and immoral woman, respectively. In this culture, an individual's reputation is affected by having a relationship before marriage.[42]

Honour killings originated to punish the perpetrators but have also become a means of acquiring large sums of money. There have been cases where men have murdered a woman in their own family, declaring her as a *'kari'* and asked for a sum of money in return from a man who they wrongly accuse of having illicit relationships with the deceased woman. This sum of money would be in exchange for his life.

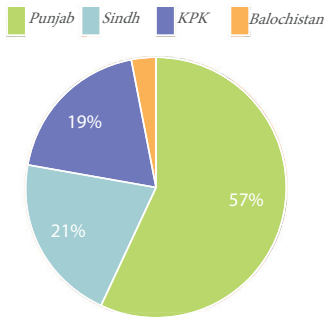
Apart from money, families can also demand girls in exchange for the *karo's* life. The asking for this kind of exchange is either one girl above the age of seven or two girls below the age of seven. The horror of this arrangement can in some cases go so far that some families break the milk (baby) teeth of their daughters to pass them off as girls above seven years of age.[43]

Forced marriages: Women can be forced into marriage with a man sometimes much older in age. This act of violence stems from the belief of 'woman as property' and 'woman as honour'.[44] Sometimes, barely pubescent girls (13 and under) are forcibly married to much older men (at times 30 years of age or older) in hopes of decreasing the financial burden on the girl's family.

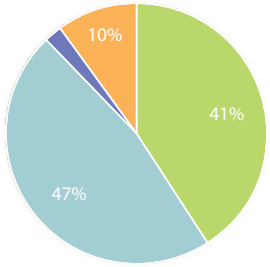
Haq Bakhshwan or Qur'an marriages: are symbolic nuptials between a woman and the Islamic Holy text, the Qur'an.[45] Qur'an marriages are conducted to keep inheritance and assets within the family.[46] This practice is common amongst the rich landlords. In this manner, a dowry is not given to the daughter since she will not have any in-laws. After her death, her property is inherited by her brother's offspring.[47]

Watta satta marriages: are marriage arrangements between a daughter of a family *x* to the son of a family *y*, on the condition that the daughter of family *y* is also given in marriage to a son of the family *x*.[48] Consequently, if one marriage fails, the other couple is forced to break their relationship. According to the cultural rules of this type of a contract is that the success of a lasting relationship is also dependant on the other couple. If one of the wives goes to her parents' home after a dispute with her husband, the wife of the other couple is forced to go back to her parent's house until the problem is resolved.[49] The purpose behind this is to put pressure on the other family in hopes of resolving the dispute.

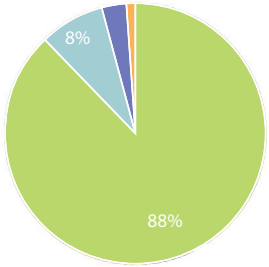
Vanni/Swara: are tribal customs in various parts of Pakistan where young girls are forced into marriage with a man of another tribe to end a tribal dispute or feud between two families.[50]



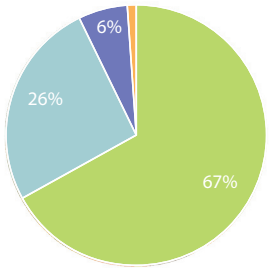
Murder



Honour killing

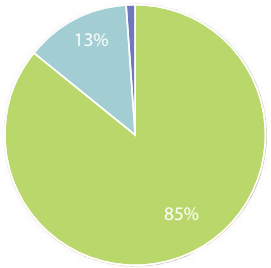


Abduction

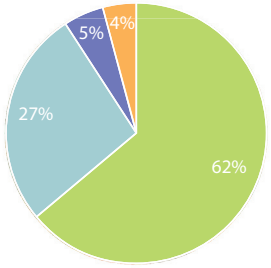


Suicide

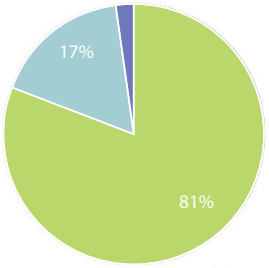
fig.13-21 Province wise breakdown of forms of violence in 2009



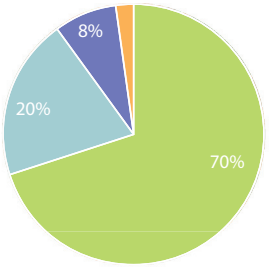
Rape/Gang rape



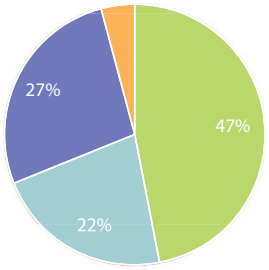
Miscellaneous cases



Acid burning



Stove burning



Domestic violence

Country vs. citizens

The government labels violence against females as 'private' violence because of it's relation to domestic issues. This compartmentalizing of violence is one of the factors behind the commonality and prevalence of violence against females. Women are discouraged to involve the police by their family, or their in-laws because of the cultural pressure of dishonour that would result from the dispute becoming public.[51]

Even if a woman gathers the courage to report a case or escapes a threat from her family, it is not easy to go through the police and the judicial system to achieve justice.[52] The police discourage women from reporting cases and try to convince them to reach a settlement with their abuser. The police also occasionally refrain from filing crime cases to decrease their workload, so that they can falsely report that their office has reduced crime under their regional administration.[53] The police may also be bribed by the abuser or his/her family to prevent the crime from being reported. There are also incidents where victims have managed to get to the police in hopes of achieving safety and security but end up being sexually abused and/or harassed.[54]

The process of taking the case to court is extremely lengthy, which also discourages women from seeking justice. Many cases take years to be resolved.[55] During this period, victims have very few choices of where to live. Most families disown their daughter(s) in fear of dishonour and threat from the abuser.

Consequently, women are left with the option of going to a shelter home which regrettably may not have enough accommodation for incoming victims of abuse.

The increasing levels of crime in Pakistan can be ascribed to these unfortunate practices which encourage perpetrators from escaping. There are very few examples of abusers being punished which reduces fear of committing crime overall.

fig.22 Domestic life in Kasur city

Thoughts

"Razia, when is that drama coming on tv?"
"In ten minutes..."
She sat there looking at me confused. She wasn't sure why she answered.
"Anam Baji, what are ten minutes? How will we know it's been ten minutes?"

...

Many reasons play a role in the existence, frequency and intensity of violence against females in Pakistan including and beyond those mentioned on the preceding pages. One can only hope that this prevalence can be decreased through careful analysis of all the motives behind the acts of violence.

There is a bias towards men in the power scale of Pakistani society which stems from a culture in which women generally stay at home and look after the household. Bearing and raising children, and simultaneously caring for in-laws is disregarded as hard work equivalent to a man's job of financially supporting a household. These women's financial dependence on their husbands has led to a prevailing belief that men are superior. This culture may have been acceptable 67 years ago, before the partition, when the world was going through radical cultural changes, but it is alarming to see that the problem still prevails even as women become financially independent.

To preserve this male hierarchy and dependence, in some cases, traditional and conservative men physically discourage the females from achieving an education.

Various interpretations of religious thought are used to support the culture of male chauvinism. For this reason, many women are forced to have children until they give birth to a son. The average household size in Pakistan is close to seven (6.8) people.[56] This increasingly uneducated population coupled with an unfavourable economy within the country has led to growing levels of poverty and illiteracy as a result.

Women have accepted their inferior status in society and believe that the culture is unalterable often as a direct result of a lack of education. The women do not recognize that their situation is problematic, and therefore change is slow. Awareness is required to modify the attitudes of both men and women.

The discouraging attitude of the judicial system also plays a role in increasing lawlessness in society. Instead of raising awareness amongst society and punishing criminals, the law indirectly encourages violence against females by not providing them with safety and security. The women believe that the government will only complicate the situation further instead of providing them with justice.

fig.23 Girl in her house, Kasur city

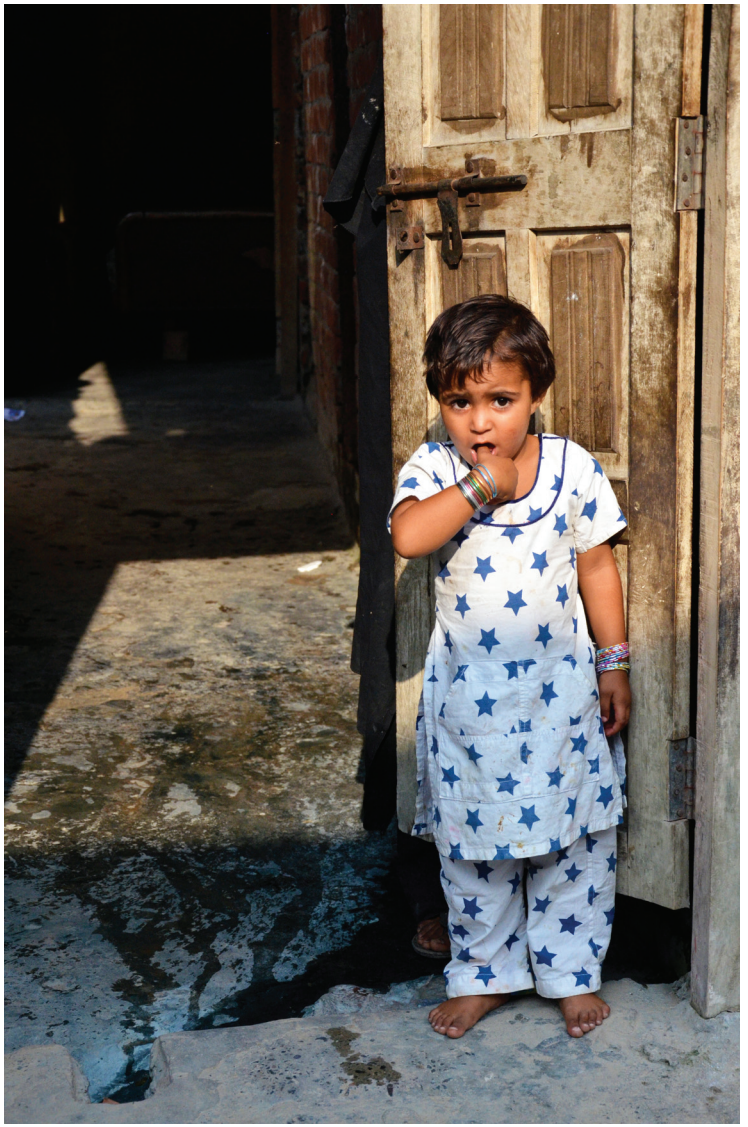


fig.24 Boy outside his house, Kasur city

Having fewer income generating family members in comparison to the number of mouths to feed is leading to increasing levels of poverty. Thus, there are very few families that can actually afford an education even if they chose to pursue one.

The increasingly high illiteracy rate is also leading to increasing levels of health concerns in the society. People have not learnt the difference between hygiene and purity. The importance of a perception of 'spiritual purity' overrides any idea of general hygiene and well being.

Education plays a vital role in advancing society and the purging of old customs and rituals that prevent social progress. Women not only need an education to earn money but also need it to trust medical professionals at times of illness. A large fraction of the rural population disregards medicine and science and consults religious healers for health related concerns. They believe that health and wellness is God's blessing and can not be attained unless He wills it. Education can help people understand the capabilities of modern medicine without affecting religious beliefs.

Education can also help breed awareness of its importance. It can enlighten young children and women about their rights in society and can encourage them to abandon limiting, traditional customs. Education can provide women with financial independence to help diminish the perception of male superiority, and as a result, can aid in a reduction of crime as women stand up for their rights.

All the factors that play a role in the crime rate against females can be addressed by a gradual increase in female empowerment and basic education. Women, children and men need to learn the ability to reflect on and evaluate a situation based on sound opinion in order to make independent choices. Each individual should be able to interpret religious thought rather than depend on or live by a single version enforced by family or culture.

Accordingly, education can help increase tolerance and value for each other's thoughts and sentiments in society. Women, specifically, need to be seen as capable individuals who aid in the progression of society rather than being perceived as a hindrance or a mere child bearing machine.

Community programs can be implemented to encourage young girls and women to obtain an education. These programs can teach women basic handicraft skills such as sewing, knitting or weaving (based on a district's handiwork background) to make them capable of earning a livelihood for themselves and their families. Simultaneously, they should be urged to learn basic reading, writing and business acumen to be qualified in handling all aspects of an independent household.

This initial step will encourage more women to step out of their houses to help them ensure that their future generations are also eager in pursuing an education and a serious career.

This thesis looks to suggest an architectural model that can serve disadvantaged women while remaining sensitive to cultural and religious values.

fig.25 Dung cakes on exterior of house-used for fuel

Architecture

"My husband kicked me out of his house and sent me back to my parents house."
"Why?"
"I fought with him too much...because he used to hit me."
"What did your parents say?"
"They told me to stop fighting with him...but I can't."
She giggled.

An idea of domesticity

To proceed with an architectural design for a learning centre for women and children, not only is it necessary to study their culture but it is also important to observe local architecture. Observing local, traditional architecture can also give us hints about the culture of the region. Most domestic architecture incorporates cultural elements to respond to its users' needs. Settlements formed into villages before the partition and continued to exist in a similar manner.

In Punjab, historically, there were two main village typologies based on the time they were formed. The older villages created before the British Raj, were built by no discernible plan except that the back walls of houses were joined together for protection as a barrier from strangers *(fig.33)*. The newer villages formed after the British Raj had wide streets creating regular blocks within a village. Each of these blocks contain a few houses with courtyards enclosed by high mud walls.[57] These two village typologies seem to exist somewhat in a similar fashion at present, but due to the increase in population, they have sprawled and scattered to take up larger areas of land.

Before and a couple of years after the partition, the orientation of the houses were such that they depended on two factors. One, for security purposes, all four sides of the house were treated as front walls if they had streets on all four sides. And, two, the orientation was factored by the location of the plot on the block,[58] this was perhaps to make a statement about who had more authority and power in the village or village block. Nowadays, the orientation of the houses are dependent on privacy. Entrances of houses are located on interior dirt streets rather than main roads.

Traditionally, houses incorporated courtyards for natural ventilation and privacy for the women to be outdoors by still being within the confinements of the house. There are various sizes of courtyards in the houses depending on the size of the family and its income. The largest are about forty by fifty feet and the smallest are about twenty by twenty feet.[59]

fig.26 Typical traditional house plan

fig.27 Typical house of a low income family in Kasur city (below)

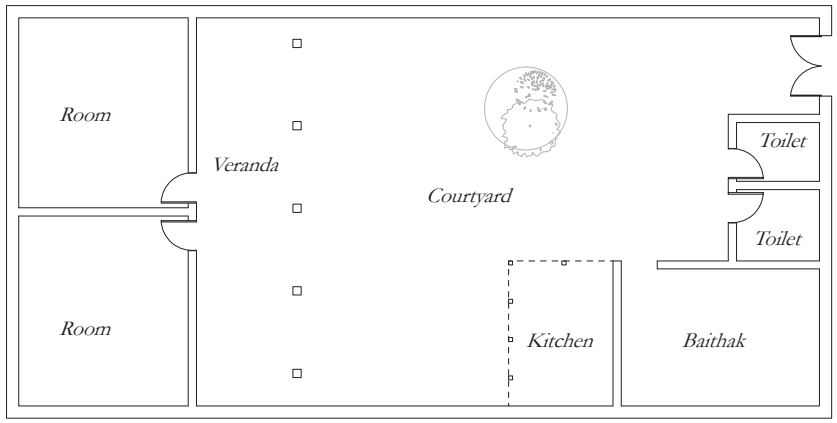


fig.28 Interior residential street in Kasur city

Traditional, simple houses have a rectangular plan with a long room in the front and two rooms at the back of the house. The rooms in the back, don't have perforations to the exterior but open into the big room in the front. The room at the front may have wooden shutters without panes of glass that open onto the veranda. There are many houses that have no windows at all[60] perhaps for privacy reasons or for extreme hot weather conditions.

The large room at the front is the main room used for sleeping; for both male and female members of the household.[61] Every member sleeps on a portable straw bed that can be moved to different parts of the house depending on the weather. The family sleeps together in the front room during the winter months and moves out to the veranda as the temperature gets warmer. The veranda is also used for resting in the afternoons during the hot summer months. In the evenings, the foldable beds are taken either into the courtyard or on top of the roof for cool breezes throughout the night hours.[62]

The ceiling of the house is the most expensive part of the building's structure. It is constructed of heavy wooden beams, and the roof is then plastered with clay. The floors of the covered rooms are made of a mixture of clay, dung and straw which requires renewal on a regular basis.[63]

The courtyard acts as the main 'room' of the house where all the daily activities and chores are carried out. Cooking is also done in the courtyard under a shaded, open structure. Women move between the veranda and the courtyard doing their chores either in the warmth of the sun, under the shade of a tree in the courtyard or in the covered veranda.[64]

Each house is different. It may house a small nuclear family, or a few families as a compound of related family members living in a joint family system. This system occurs when an elderly man and woman are living with their married sons and their families and unmarried sons/daughters. All of the income is collected and the household expenditures are made from this joint family account.[65]

Nowadays, the culture of living in a joint-family system is still practiced, not only in poor homes but also in well-off, well-educated households. Rural architecture remains in the same manner as described above. Domestic architecture varies with the amount of money a household has.

Shelter homes

Apart from the traditional setting of a family home, there is a different concept of domesticity that exists in Pakistan. These abstractions are in the form of shelter homes that provide abused, disadvantaged women with a safe place to live if they have been forced to leave their family homes due to abusive conditions. These homes are run by the state or charitable/social work organisations.[66]

Most major cities and larger villages have shelter homes, yet the demand for beds is consistently greater than the number available. Even with this demand, many women are not aware of their existence. Although their purpose is a specific one, to provide a secure place for dependent women, in some case these women end up undergoing more abuse if not the same amount than what they ran away from. This is especially true of state run shelter homes.[67]

The existing homes as they are also don't help in portraying and emphasising a strong, healthy image of an empowered woman. On the contrary, the abuse these women face at the shelters increases their sense of helplessness and dependence on men. They remind the women of their inferior status and the notion of being man's property. The abuse they encounter may be from the male guards at the shelter and sometimes even by the female wardens and other women who are responsible for their management and safety.[68]

The most well-known shelter home is called the *Dar-ul-Aman* (House of Peace) and it has its branches in most major cities and towns. The Lahore branch was the first home of the like to help abused women. It was founded by an Islamic Social Welfare organization, *Jamiat-i-Hamayat-i-Islam* in 1963. The Lahore branch was built for a population of 40 women containing four rooms with ten women in each room. At times, due to higher demand, more women are placed than the facility could accommodate.[69]

The working operation behind the *Dar-ul-Aman* is that it caters to women who have filed court cases against their families

1 Entrance
2 Visitors
3 Toilet
4 Clerk's Room
5 Lobby
6 Classroom
7 Dormitory
8 Lounge
9 Dining Hall
10 Pantry
11 Store
12 Kitchen
13 Bedroom
14 Warden's Office
15 Lawn
16 Office
17 Library
18 Sick Room
19 Dress Room

fig.29 Current ground floor plan of Dar-ul-Aman, Lahore

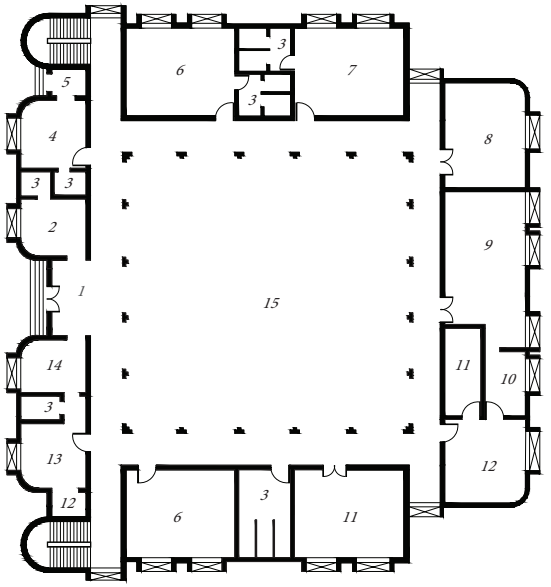
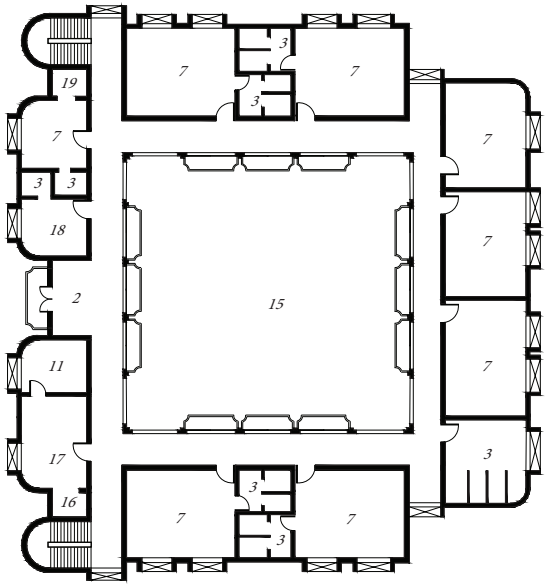


fig.30 Current second floor plan of Dar-ul-Aman, Lahore



and cannot go back to them. The court then sends these women to live at the *Dar-ul-Aman* until their case is settled by the courts. Therefore, when a woman is admitted into the *Dar-ul-Aman*, she is not allowed to leave unless she has received permission from the courts (this is due to security reasons). Even though there is no law that gives the courts the ability to confine women in a place as such, in some cases it is enforced to the women's detriment.[70]

The women are confined behind large metal doors guarded by armed guards. There is a small door within the large door that allows people in and out. There are strict orders given by the court to the shelter house regarding letting people in and out, and as a result it is always guarded by heavy security.[71]

The *Dar-ul-Aman* also charges to its occupants a fee of Rs.20/day (20 cents). Since the majority of the women are there due to lack of support from their families, they cannot afford to pay even that small of a fee. Due to this reason, they are harassed and sexually abused during their stay at the *Dar-ul-Aman*. There are cases where women are beaten by the warden and the guards and starved for days in a row.[72]

Women have also complained about the lack of food, bedding, hygienic and medical facilities provided for them and their children during their stay. Due to lack of medical facilities, women fall sick and are quarantined in the toilets if it is a case where they may have contracted a contagious disease.[73]

The *Dar-ul-Aman* in Karachi disclosed the fact that some women were being prostituted by the guards and were living in terrible conditions.[74]

In Northern Pakistan, in Peshawar, there is a similar kind of a shelter home known as *Dar-ul-Aman-Drul-o-Atfal* which is run by the All Pakistan Women's Association. They refuse to accommodate women involved in police cases who are seeking refuge so women end up in jails or mental institutions or are treated like criminals. Many women are expelled from the shelter house if they protest or encourage other women to do so.[75] This way they end up out on the streets begging for a livelihood for themselves and their children.

Another kind of a halfway house, *Dastak*, literally translates into 'knock' or 'knocking' was founded by AGHS Associates and exists in the city of Lahore. This shelter serves abused women for a period of four to six months. The women are encouraged to stay there temporarily and seek employment. The lawyers at AGHS Associates felt the need to create a place that will accommodate abused women and provide them with free legal advice. Their policy is never to reject any woman in need and therefore at times have had to make room for more than their capacity of thirty women.[76]

Unlike *Dar-ul-Aman*, women are looked after well. They are given the freedom to leave the centre to seek employment and their progress is checked by a supervisor. If they are unable to seek employment, the women are welcome to stay there till they are able to carry their own weight. Due to restricted finances, *Dastak* is unable to help the women find employment nor does it provide training of any sort.[77]

There are many organisations spreading awareness on the serious nature of the Pakistan's attitude towards their women. Some NGOs have started programs that provide micro-financing opportunities to women and their families. They help in empowering women and encouraging women to become independent.

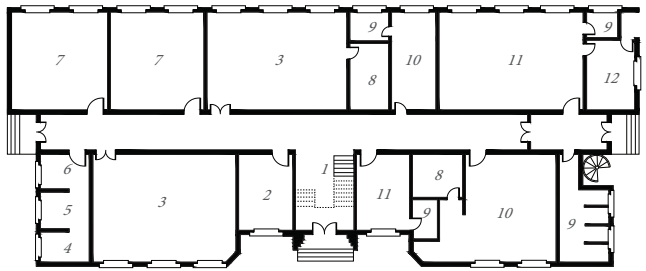
Although, there are some steps and measures put in place to help rectify the situation, the approach and maintenance of them are proving to be unsuccessful. Education must be coupled with the existing solutions to help change attitudes. Some members of the society that have chosen to put forward these measures to help change society have acknowledged the fact that a problem exists, persists and needs to be solved. This in itself is the first step towards change; that is acceptance. Next comes the methodology that one chooses to adopt to obtain this change.

As important as these two aids are to the Pakistani society steeped in poverty, a learning system and culture to tolerate education and advancement needs to be implemented at a grass roots level to help reform the attitudes of the people. This is ultimately the purpose of the thesis. A dialogue needs to be initiated to see a change in the attitudes of people one step at a time.

1 Entrance
2 Staff
3 Workshop
4 Dyeing
5 Washing
6 Ironing
7 Classroom
8 Store
9 Toilet
10 Manager
11 Nursery
12 Kitchen
13 Training Space
14 Adult Literacy Centre
15 Terrace
16 Room

fig.31 Ground floor plan of Sanatzar, Lahore. Women empowerment school

fig.32 Second floor plan of Sanatzar, Lahore. Women empowerment school (below)



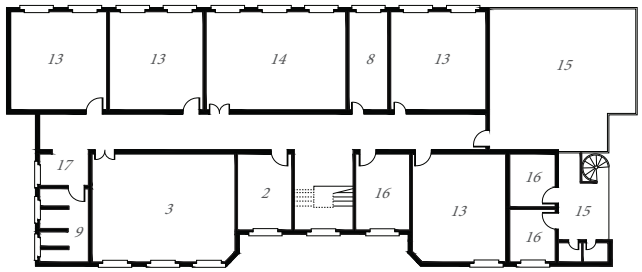
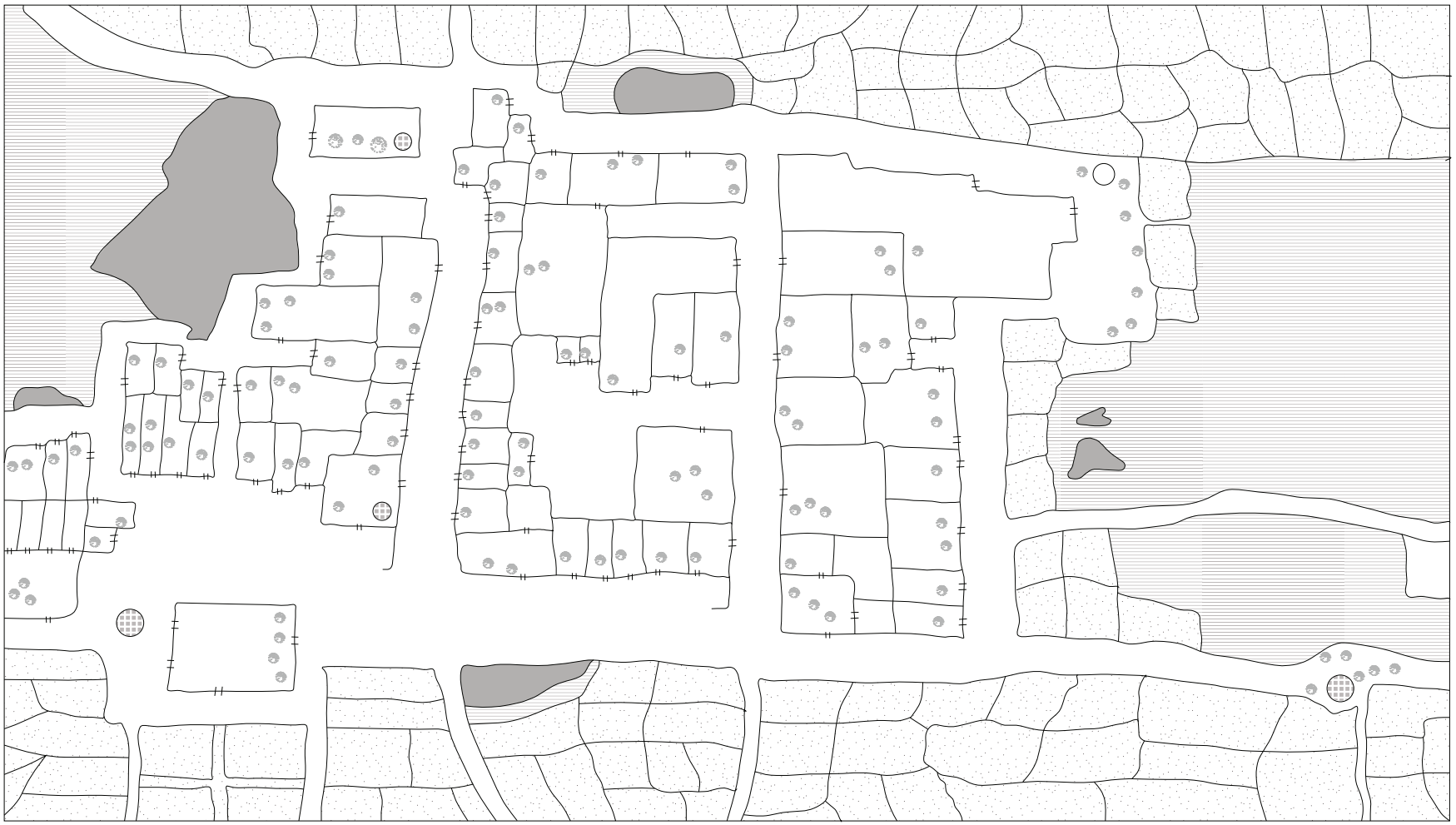


fig.33 Traditional village plan: entrances tend to open onto main streets with their backs against each other



Well

Pond

Field

Barren land

fig.34 Housing in Kasur city

fig.35 Main street in Kasur city

Site | 31.1170° N, 74.4502°E

"How many countries are there in the world, Razia?"
"Three. Lahore, Pakistan and Karachi. No, no wait...four. Add Canada to that."
"Where do you live?"
...
She smiled nervously not knowing what to say next.

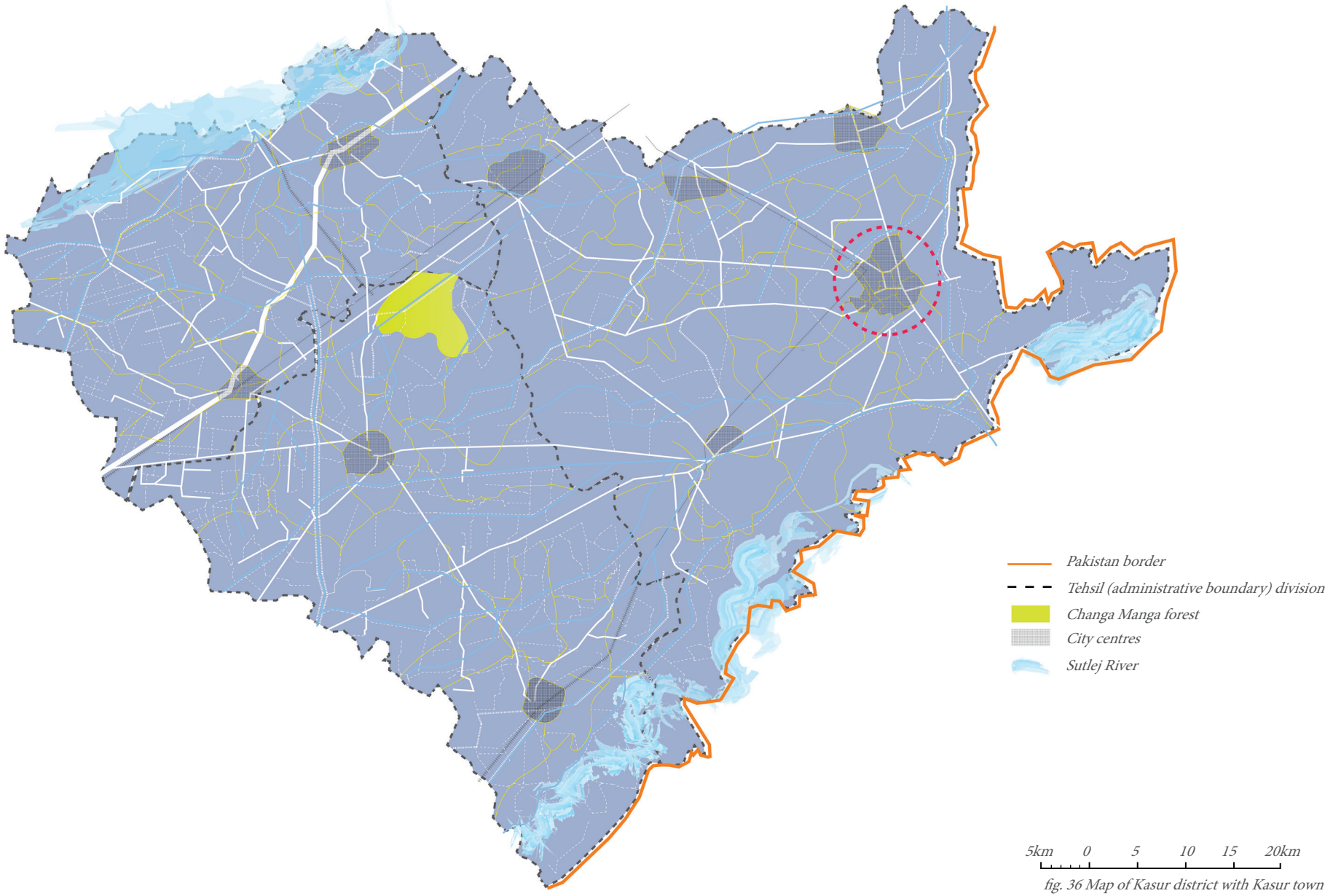


fig. 36 Map of Kasur district with Kasur town highlighted
Population: 3,175,880
Area: 3995 km²

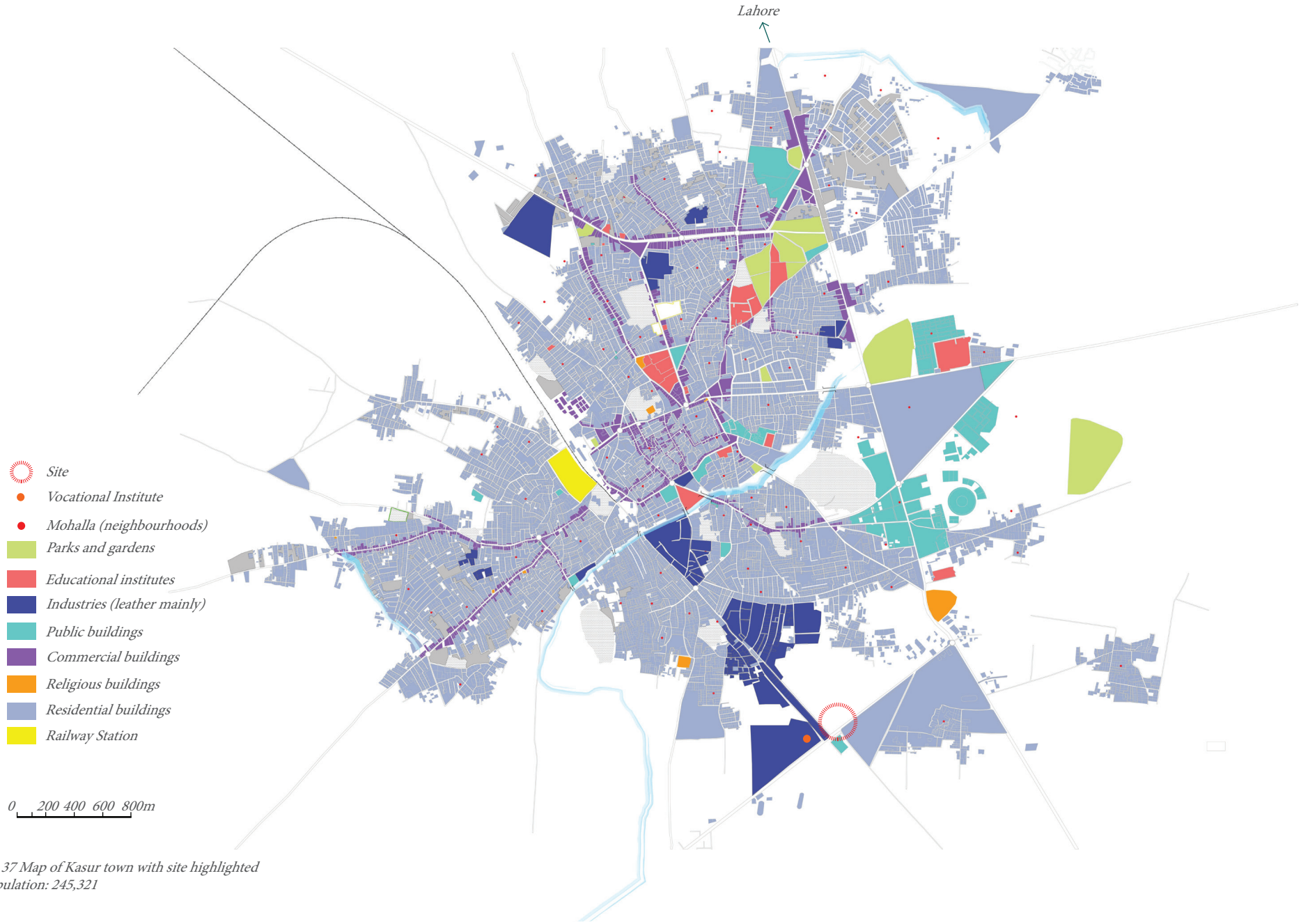


fig. 37 Map of Kasur town with site highlighted
Population: 245,321

The district of Kasur came into being in July 1976. Previously, it was part of the Lahore district. Kasur city is the capital of the district. Kasur city is situated 55 km South East of the city of Lahore near the Sutlej River.[78] Kasur's centre lies about 77km from the Pak-India border. Due to its location near the border, it has remained a famous war front and was home to many immigrants at the time of Pakistan's independence. The town's population radically changed at the time of the partition.[79] Its proximity to the border encouraged most Hindus and Sikhs to move to India and encouraged Muslims from India to move to Pakistan.

The name of the town and district of Kasur has two founding stories. According to Hindu traditions, Lord *Rama's* son, *Kush* was believed to be the ruler of an ancient kingdom centred around the present day town of Kasur and his brother *Lava/Loh* is believed to be the founder of the city of Lahore.[80]

According to another theory, it was founded by *Pashtun* families who oringated from Kabul at the time of the Mughal emperor, Akbar. The Pashtuns built twelve forts (*kots*) named after 12 family clans. Each fort in Farsi is known as *Qasr*. The plural of the word *Qasr*, is *Qasoor*, giving Kasur its name.[81]

Kasur was ruled by the Delhi sultanate and the Mughal empire. Under the Mughal rule, Kasur flourished and was known for its commerce and trade. After the decline of the Mughal Empire, the Sikhs came into power and the Muslims were living under strict regulations. Following the Sikhs, the British Raj came into power and constructed vital infrastructure such as irrigation canals to irrigate vast regions of the district.[82]

Kasur is enriched with history and was also one of the towns visited by the Chinese pilgrim, Hsuan Tsang as part of his Silk Road journey. Kasur's history has been marked by many notable kings, emperors, Mughals, Afghans, Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims.[83]

Many well-known politicians, musicians, poets and artists come from Kasur. This is due to its rich history related to various settlers, Sufi saints and scholars.[84] Despite Kasur's rich history, the district is one of the least educated in the province of

fig.38 Transporting leather
fig.39 Man working in leather tannery (middle)
fig.40 Wet blue skins (below)

fig.41 Animal hair left out for segregation

fig.42 Processed animal hide drying in sun (below)

Punjab.[85] Due to this reason and cultural issues, majority of the town's population lives in poverty with a rural population of 77 per cent.[86] Considering its close proximity to flourishing cities like Lahore, it seems like a missed opportunity to see the district and town of Kasur in the situation that it is in presently.

Despite the cultural trade and political changeover in Kasur's history, Kasur city still remains one of the most conservative cities in Pakistan. Apart from high illiteracy rates, women are strongly discouraged from pursuing an education and/or a career. The people of Kasur are also accustomed to religious discrimination. There is discrimination between different Muslim sects but more prominently between the Mulsims and the Christians which are a visible minority . Religious biases have continued for years in Kasur and have become extremely common amongst the people.[87]

A large number of women in Kasur veil themselves in public and accept domestic abuse as the right of their husbands. There is very little awareness on the rights of women and children in the region.[88]

Another serous societal phenomena is alcoholism and drug abuse in Kasur. Many Christians hold liquor licences and have access to alcohol. Due to the prominent Christian population in Kasur, even Muslims can gain illegal access to alcohol if they choose to, despite the religious restrictions. Kasur is also home to a local brewery that produces alcoholic drinks which are smuggled across the border to India for income generation.

The ease of access to alcohol amongst uneducated groups has led to an increase in alcoholism and drug addiction. Many male members of the society are victims of these diseases which in turn has led to an increase in child labour. Women and children are forced to work to earn a living for their families.[89]

The town of Kasur is home to very large industries that employ people based on contractual labour.[90] The main industries in Kasur are textile, leather tanning, yarn and paper. The leather tanning industry is one of the biggest in the region and is very famous for the processing of raw animal hide to a state of 'wet blue'. This state is the final stage in the leather tanning process

before it is used for producing leather products. In this state, the leather is preserved and does not deteriorate.

This leather tanning industry provides a livelihood to a population of approximately 400,000 people in the main town. There are almost 300 units of leather tanning currently operating in the town of Kasur. These units altogether process 275 tonnes of raw animal hide every single day. The raw hide is collected from various places in Pakistan and also comes internationally from places such as Russia. Majority of the value addition to the wet blue skins is done in cities other than Kasur, such as Sialkot (for sporting goods) and Karachi.

The leather tanning process is taken care of by men in the industry due to its labour-intensive nature. A total of 132 chemicals are used in the process. These chemicals are released in the environment and pollute the air, water and soil. This in turn made it hazardous to produce edible crops in the district. A waste management treatment plant was constructed by the Pakistani government with aid from the UN to remediate the problem. Now all the 32 different waste materials produced by the tanneries are recyclable, including the used chemicals.

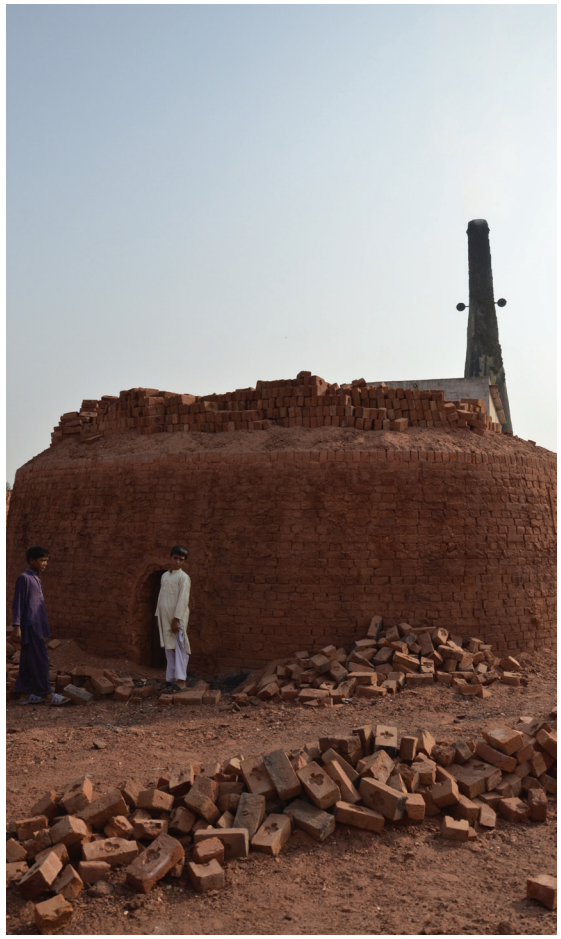
In this growing industry, women and children play a vital and alarming role. Women and children participate in the hair shaving process of the raw animal hide. This tedious task is not only important but has also resulted in severe health risks to these families who participate in this activity to earn a livelihood; a mere Rs.100-200/day ($1-2 CAD/day).

This work has been deliberately left for manual labour as it provides many citizens with an honest livelihood. Women and children also have smaller hands ideal for this particularly delicate job. The hair segregated from the skins are used for various purposes. Sheep hair is used to make wool. Hair from specific types of goats' tails are used to make *pashmina* cloth. Hair from horses' tails are used in bows for stringed musical instruments. Other types of hair are used to make tents for army use as well as ropes. A lot of the hair is also shipped to China for further processing.[91]

Due to the commonality of contractual labour in the tanneries there is lack of job security for many families. These families send out the maximum number of family members out to work to ensure an ongoing livelihood. This livelihood does not have an age or gender restriction.[92]

fig.43 Housing between tanneries
fig.44 Wooden utensils manufacturing (middle)
fig.45 Proposed site (below)

fig.46-54 Typical day at a brick kiln in Kasur city



The tanneries also prefer children as workers because the children do not demand high wages as compared to adult employees. People in Kasur believe that it is more important to gain a skill than to pursue an education because the major industries in Kasur which provide an income to these families revolve around skill related work.[93]

Children are also employed to transport chemicals, hides and waste materials on donkey carts.[94] They also participate in spray painting and drying the skins out in the sun.[95]

None of the workers are fortunate enough to receive medical insurance. The labour force working with the raw animal hide and chemicals develop various skin and respiratory diseases overtime. Women and children, specifically, are prone to developing various rashes and skin cancer due to the nature of their job working with the skins of dead animals.

The industries employing these people do not supply any safety gear or sheltered space for them to work in. These women and children segregate hair in open air, under the scorching sun. These workers are forced to work under these conditions since they have no better option. As an example, anyone of the over 100 employees working at the Kasur wastewater treatment plant, has on average, 13 people dependent on him (including parents, children and relatives). 30-40% of the workers also belong to religious minorities (Christian), and as a result they are among the poorest of the citizens.[96]

Apart from the leather industry, Kasur is also famous for producing wooden toys, wooden furniture and woven carpets.

Kasur is also home to numerous brick kilns. Women, men and children of all ages work at these brick kilns to earn a living. At one of the kilns that I visited, there were 250 men and 50 women working. The whole process of producing bricks takes two weeks, where the bricks bake in an oven for eight days. Each kiln produces about 120,000 bricks per month. They charge Rs.6500 (66 CAD) for an order of 1000 bricks and Rs.100-150 (1-1.5 CAD) for the handling.

As discussed earlier, every major district and town has a women's shelter home. The one at Kasur has only 5-6 women there currently compared to 150 women in Lahore due to extreme security concerns in the district. There is a very high rate of murder in the rural areas.

The site I have chosen is situated across the road from the Kasur wastewater management treatment plant and beside a vocational institute. This plot of land is currently unoccupied but is being used by the tanneries to dry the hides after soaking them in chemicals. The site sits close to the main town market, transport hubs and numerous brick kilns.

fig.55 Site

fig.56 Site on left of dirt road with Kasur waste water treatment plant in distance

fig.57 Woman walking by proposed site

My Contribution

"Look! Look at me, I'm rich! My parents take so much care of me. I'm so glad I don't live with my husband anymore."
She stood there showing me two bills of Rs.100.
"What do you mean?"
"Every time I go home and give my parents' my week's earnings, they give me more money back."
"How much do you get every week?"
"A blue bill."
"You mean a thousand rupees?"
"Yeah, but look, now I have more bills...I'm rich."

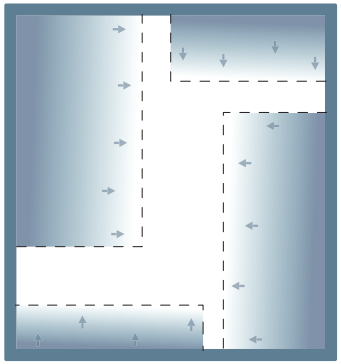


fig.58 Concept diagram: manipulation of exterior walls into program volumes

It is clear from the statistics of the town of Kasur that some form of an intervention addressing the current situation of education and women needs to implemented. Looking closely and analysing the great potential in Kasur's leather industry steeped in a beautifully, historic place makes it befitting for an architectural experiment. Taking into consideration the crafts and cultural presence of the town, it seems possible to combine art and shelter to form a new idea of domesticity for the region.

The intervention is a multi-program compound that houses opportunities for new beginnings. The site is currently being used by leather tanneries for the hair separation and skin drying processes. The design incorporates the current uses of the site and proposes an organized system for the leather related tasks.

The program of the compound is designed to attract women and children to participate in creating a sustainable and financially secure future for each other.

The planning of the compound is affected by various design strategies, such as: access to the street, privacy and attraction points to recruit new residents and funding. The site is essentially zoned into various blocks which house similar programs to create micro communities focusing on similar activities within a larger setting.

fig.59 Programmatic diagram

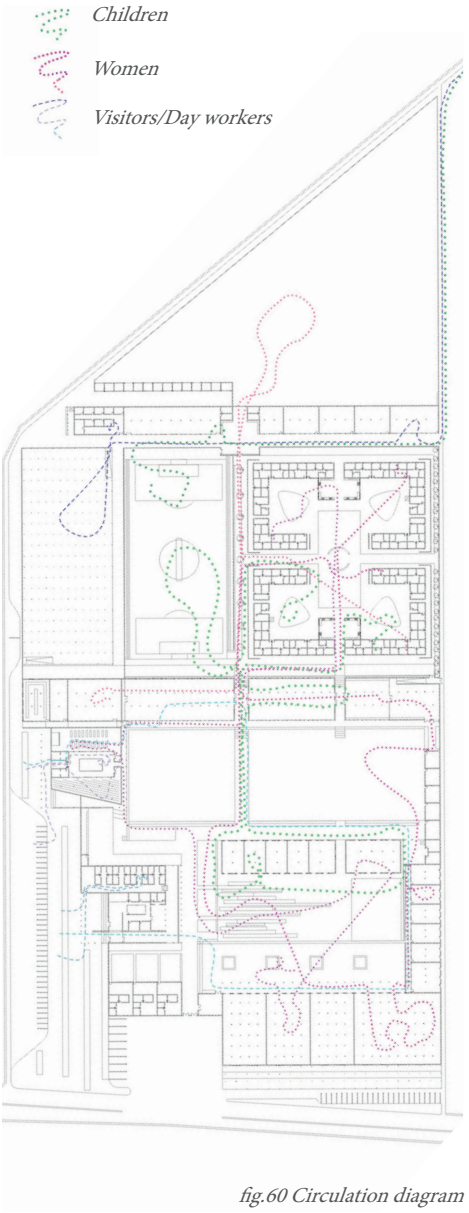


fig.60 Circulation diagram

fig. 61 Site Plan

I imagine a place where women are in charge of their own lives the future of the children they bring into this world. In this place, there is no one who can tell them that they are a burden on their families' or that they are inferior to any human being.
I imagine a place where young girls learn to read, write and pursue an education without being fearful.
I imagine a place where young boys are taught to respect women and value them from an early age so that when they grow older, they are able to make the right choices.
I imagine a place where women and children are taught responsibility and to value each other's life by providing them with sanitary conditions to live in and trustworthy healthcare.
I imagine a place where people live in a close-knit community and genuinely feel the need to care for their neighbours.
I imagine a place where the women are the head of the family and feel empowered by the feeling of hard-earned money in their hands.
I imagine a place, where there is a future to look forward to.

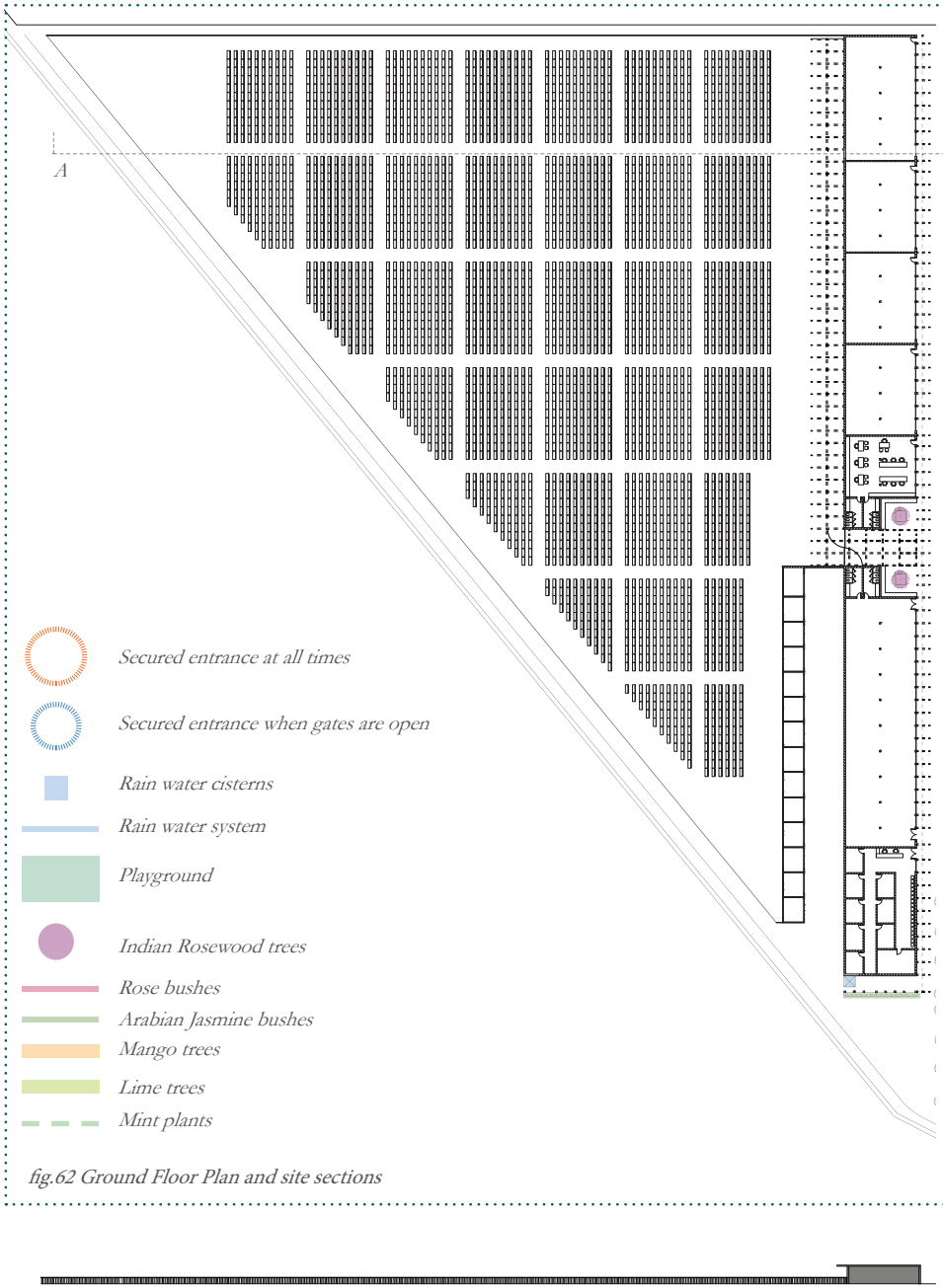
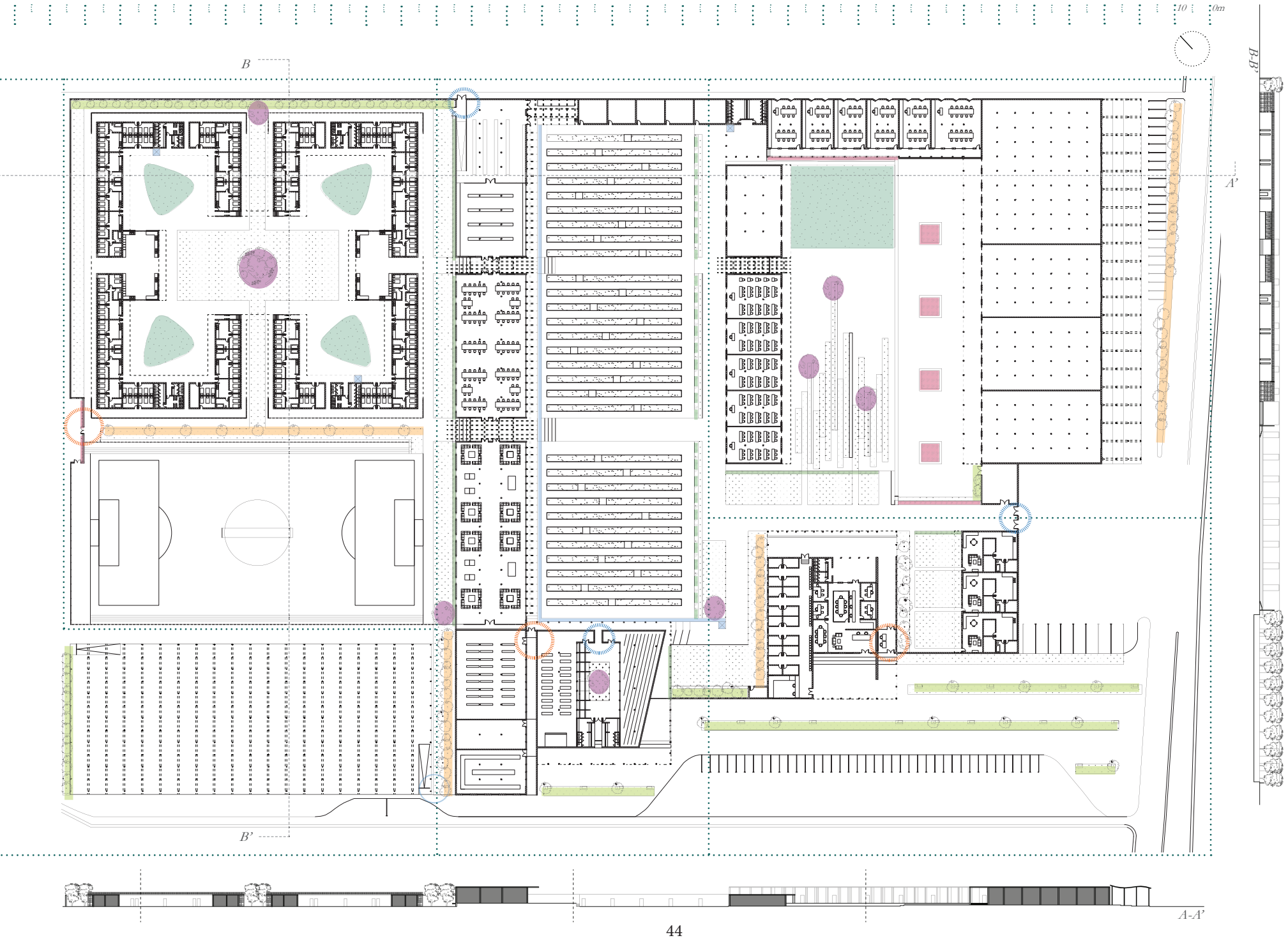


fig.62 Ground Floor Plan and site sections


B
B'
A'
B-B'
A-A'
10
0m

Zone A:

Entrance | 1: the main entrance into the compound is off the side street on the south western part of the site. It houses a security point where visitors will go through a security check before entering into the compound.

Administration office | 2: The administration block includes offices which help in running and maintaining the compound. The employees will be responsible for attracting new women and children to be a part of the community, research on new funding strategies and maintaining the existing operations.

Clinic | 3: a primary clinic is located by the administration for street access to encourage engagement of the compound with the outside local community. The local community having access to a clinic will raise awareness of the compound in the city and encourage more women and children to pursue a healthier lifestyle.

This primary clinic will also meet the needs of the residents of the compound and is located near the learning centre for any immediate health concerns a woman or child might face while learning. This clinic will also includes a psychiatrist's office which will provide women and children with private sessions to overcome traumatizing situations they may have faced in their previous homes.

Residences for security employees | 4: There are three residences for the security employees and their families. They will be responsible for maintaining security at the gates that open to the external community of Kasur. They would be crucial for the protection of the residents and therefore crucial to the operation of the facility.

Generator room | 5: this room is for storing and maintaining an external power source such as a diesel operated generator or an UPS (uninterrupted power supply). They will supply power during power cuts (after all the power supplied from the solar collectors has depleted).

Loading Area | 6: for shipping and receiving purposes of material to and from the learning centre.

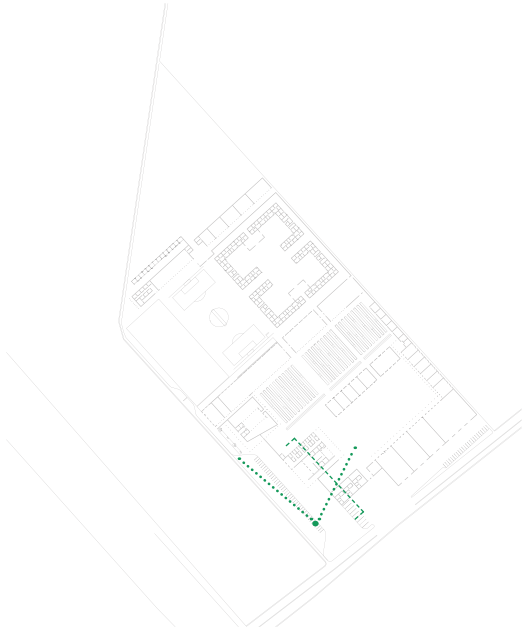
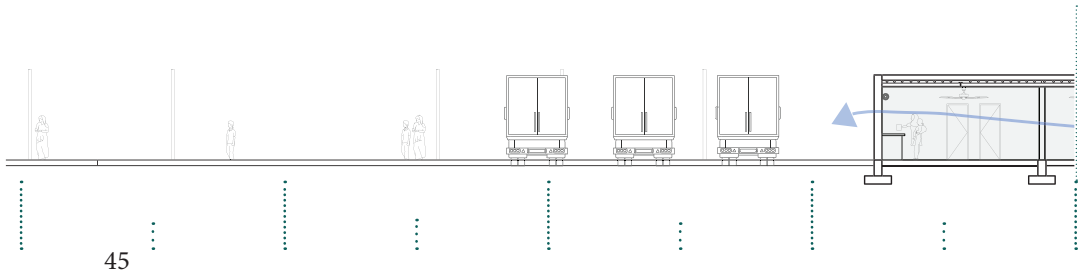
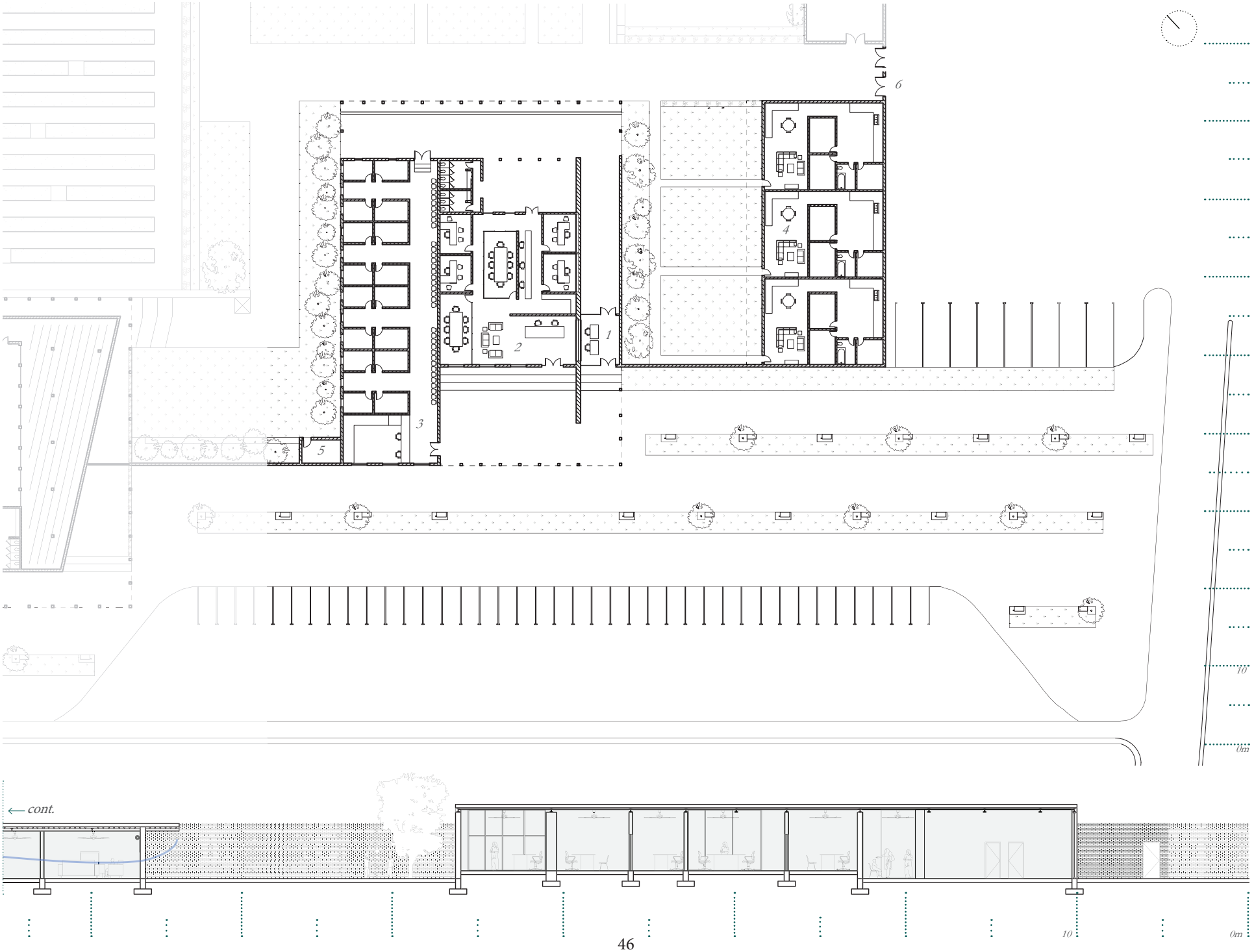


fig.63 Plan of Zone A (right)

fig.64 Section of Zone A (below)

fig.65 View of skill development institute's main entrance (p.47-48)




6
4
1
2
3
5
10'
0m
cont.
10
0m

Cellphone charging poles

Zone B: [the learning centre]
Training and Workshop spaces | 7: for women to learn and develop handicraft skills. There are four workshop and training spaces that will produce bamboo furniture and household items[a], tailoring and embroidery of clothes[b], production of small leather items[c] and wooden utensils and household items[d]. The workshops are also equipped with a storage space by the loading area to receive and store materials and finished products for shipment[e].

Outdoor Market | 8: is for selling the products the women will produce. It will also invite external vendors to sell their products to increase communication and networking between the residents of the facility and the outside community of Kasur. The products sold in the market will help generate capital for the maintenance of the facility.

Adult Learning School | 9: There are six classrooms to teach women basic language, business and math skills. Women will get a chance to learn how to read and write Urdu, basic English, math skills, business development for future sustenance of their families, health courses and independence and personality building lessons.

Children's school | 10: There are five classrooms for children of an elementary level where they will have the opportunity to learn the district's school curriculum. The classrooms are available for the children of the residents of the compound, and to the local community of Kasur. The enrolment of day time students will also be a source of revenue for the operations.

Day care | 11: this facility provides services for the women who have infants and will need to be tended while their mothers are busy learning and developing skills.

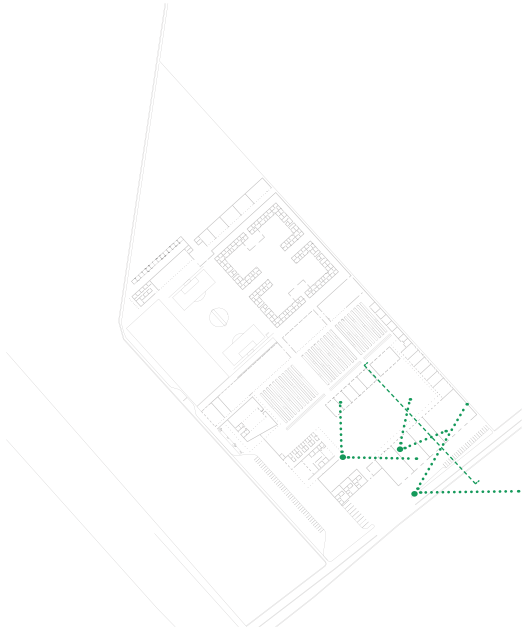


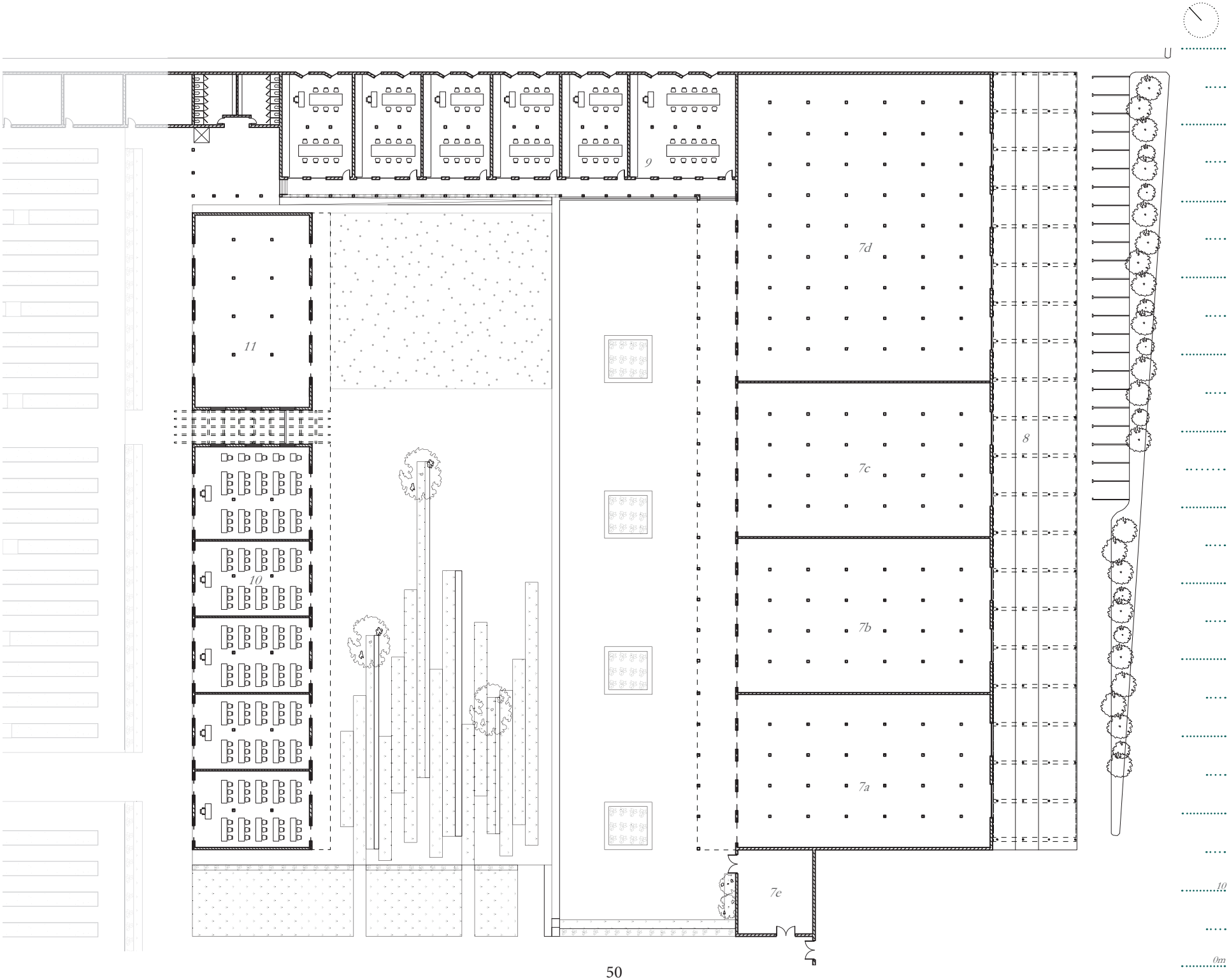
fig.66 Plan of Zone B (right)

fig.67 Section of Zone B (p.51-52)

fig.68 View of learning centre courtyard (p.51-52)

fig.69 View of training centre/workshop (p.53-54)

fig.70 View of outdoor market (p.55-56)


9
11
7d
8
7c
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7b
7a
7e
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cont.
10
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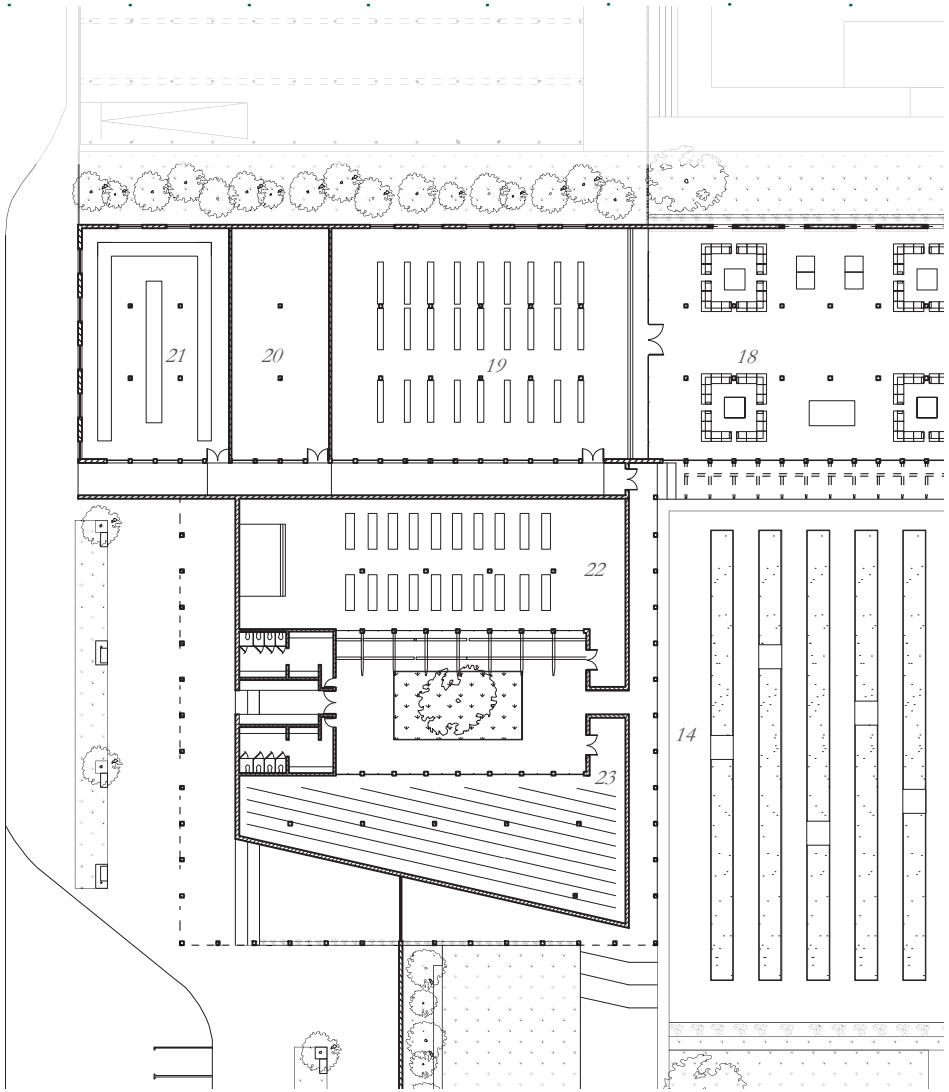
Zone C:
Kitchen/Outdoor Kitchen | 12: for cooking the daily meals of the residents. Women who are learning, developing skills and living at the facility will take turns to cook for all the women and children. The outdoor kitchen is necessary as many dishes require strong fragrant spices.

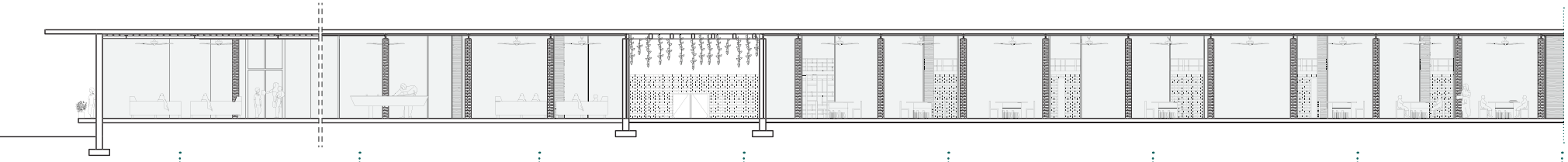
Pantry | 13: for storing all the supplies required for their daily meals. The facility will be able to store rice, grains, flour and other ingredients in bulk.

Vegetable garden | 14: will be used for growing vegetables and herbs such as potatoes, turmeric, mint, tomatoes, carrots and eggplants. The vegetables produced can also be sold to the local community of Kasur in the outdoor market. The garden will be a source of sustenance for the project and simultaneously be a therapeutic form of sustenance for the women and children residing in the compound.

Pickling room | 15: This room will be used for producing pickled mango, carrots and limes. These pickled products can also be packaged and sold to the external community in the market.

Silos | 16: There are four silos to store the seeds and gardening equipment for the vegetable garden and pickling room.





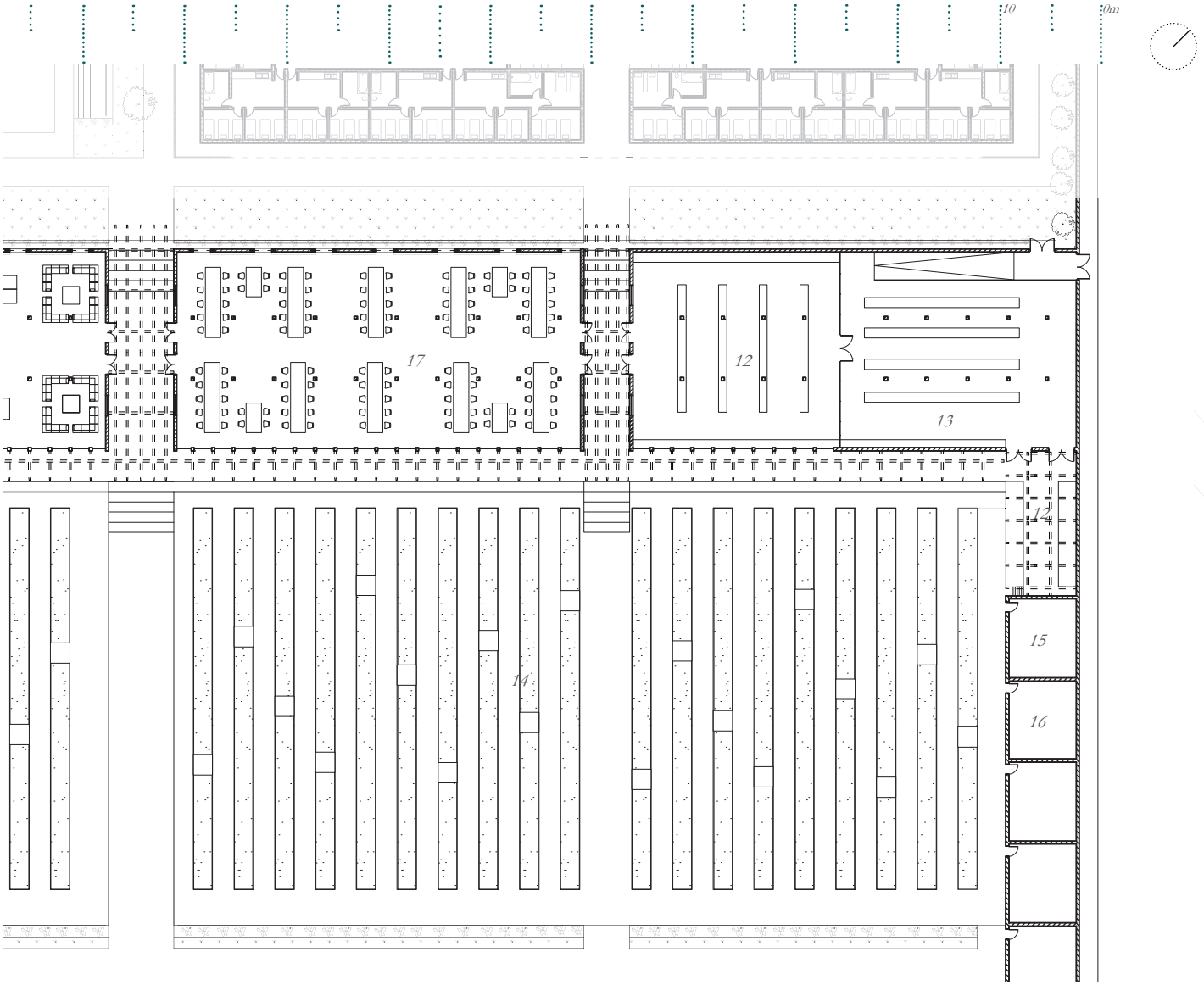
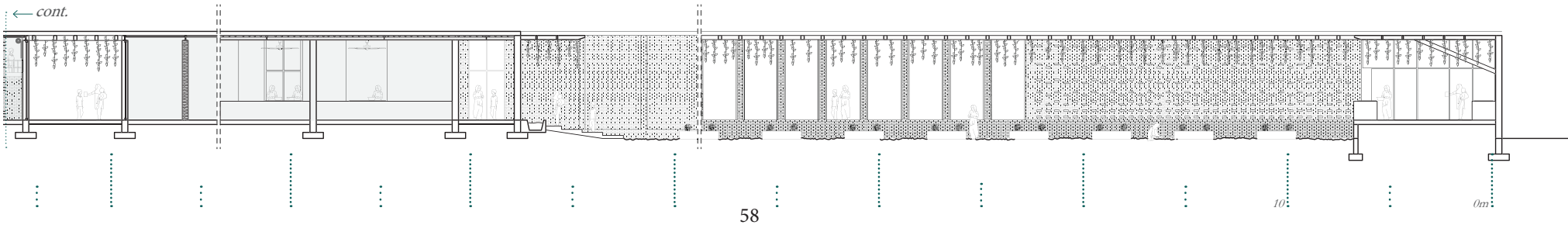


fig.71 Plan of Zone C (left)

fig.72 Section of Zone C (below)

fig.73 Section through mosque and church (p.59)

fig.74 View of dining area and vegetable garden (p.59-60)



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0m

Dining/Library area | 17: is open during the day for the women and children to read and take part in activities during meal time.

Lounge & Recreation space | 18: is a space for entertaining visitors and relaxing from their daily activities. The women and children living in the compound can use this space for recreation that has table tennis and pool tables.

Bookstore | 19: is a designated area for a bookstore that will be rented to an external vendor. This will be a source of ongoing capitol that can be used in the daily operations of the facility. The bookstore will be essential in encouraging young women and children to read and spend time in the bookstore or library area. It will be open to the public.

Hair Salon | 20: is also an externally operated salon. The tenants will pay rent money to the compound and will employ the women who live in the compound as aestheticians. This will provide the women with a different skill and exposure to a different stream of work. It will be open to the public.

Convenience Store | 21: Like the hair salon and the bookstore, the convenience store will be rented out to tenants thus providing a monthly income. It is a space for interaction with the external community of Kasur. It is located on the street for easy access and will provide the women and children living inside the compound with daily necessities.

Church | 22: 50% of the child population working in the tanneries are Christian[97] and therefore them and their families are a visible minority. It is important to provide the women and children with activities and community places that they are familiar with.

Mosque | 23: is located beside the church to provide the remaining Muslim population with a space they are familiar with. The mosque and the church act as a strong anchor for attracting funding for running the facility.

Zone D:

Residences | 24: are located towards the Northern end of the site with communal courtyard spaces for socializing and recreation for the children. The four distinct courtyards hold playgrounds of varying difficulty levels for different age groups. The residences are equipped with bathrooms, laundry and small kitchenettes. There are shared rooms for single women and small family apartments.

Cricket/Hockey Field | 25: it is important to provide the community with a designated space to play cricket or hockey as currently the open site grounds are used by young teenagers for cricket. The cricket field will be open to the public during the daytime and will be supervised by a security guard at all times.

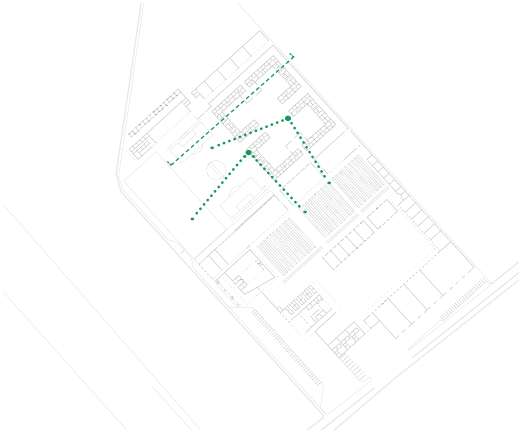
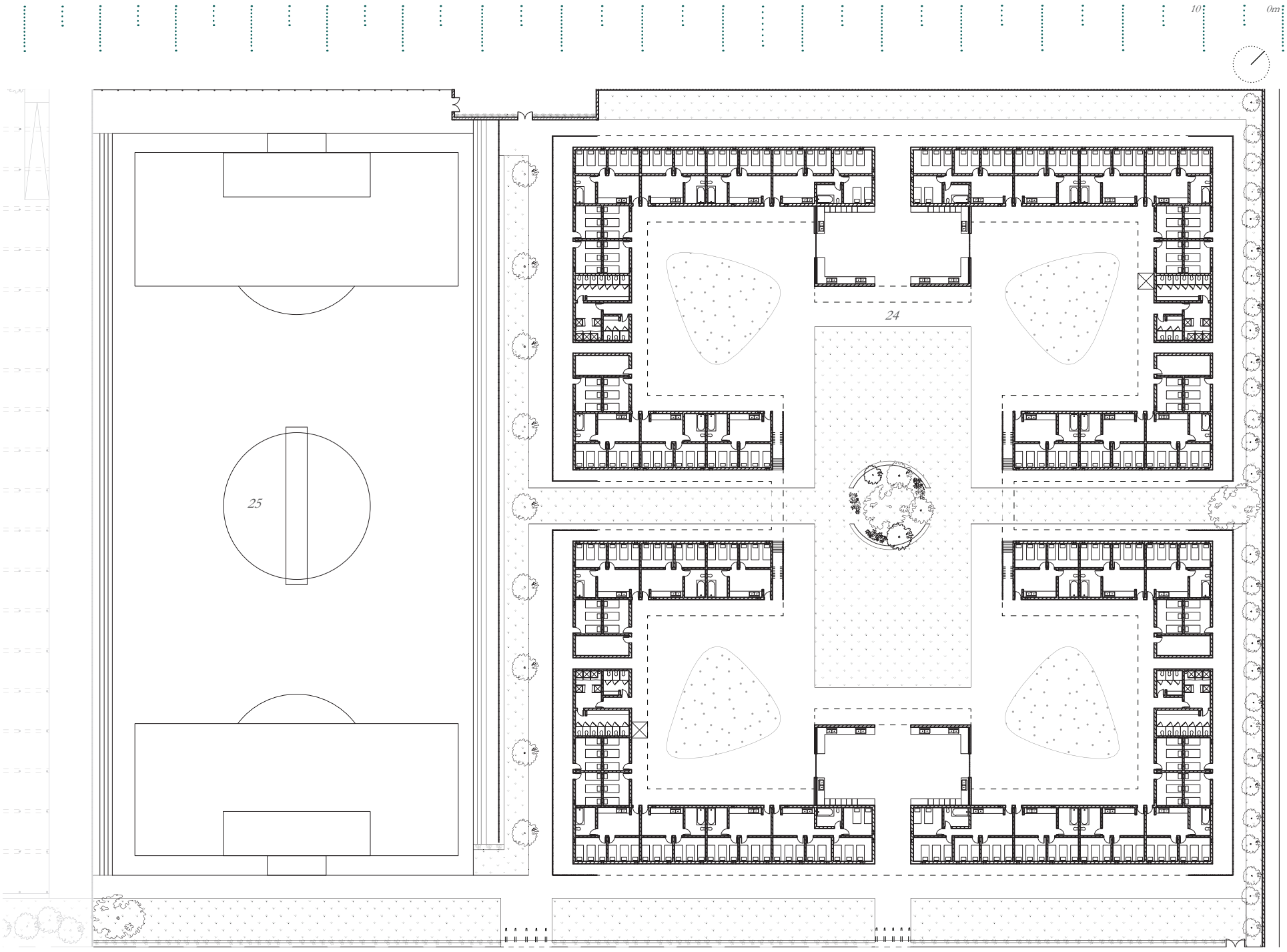


fig.75 Plan of Zone D (right)

fig.76 Section of Zone D (p.63-64)

fig.77 View of housing veranda (above)

fig.78 View of housing area (p.63-64)


10
0m
24
25

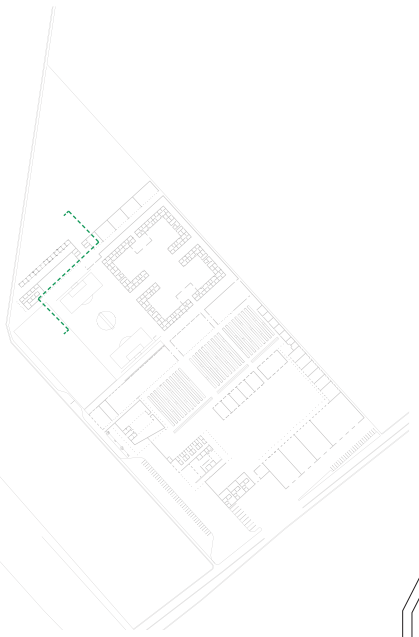
cont.
10
0m

Zone E:

Hair Separation | 26: is the designated space sunk half a metre below ground level for the tedious task of separating the hair from the animal skins for the leather tanning process. Currently, women and children are employed for this job and work under the heat of the sun to earn a living for their families. The hair separation area is covered by a canopy of solar collectors. Sinking the area half a metre below ground level gives the women privacy from the street and also helps in preventing breezes from affecting their work. The area is lined with tables and storage where the women will work in shifts and charge a higher wage from the tanneries for getting the job done. The women will also be provided with sanitation gear and lessons on why it is important to keep hygiene in mind while working with chemicals and raw animal hide.

Training/Workshop spaces | 27: there are smaller training and workshop spaces where part time female students can come and learn similar skills as being taught within the main facility. These spaces fall on the route which the women will take daily to get to the hair separation area for their job. In this way it acts as an attraction point to entice women to learn a skill and enrol themselves within the facilities' programs.

Administration | 28: There is a smaller administration which will be in charge of running the operations of the northern part of the site. It will be a part of the main administration which lies in Zone A.



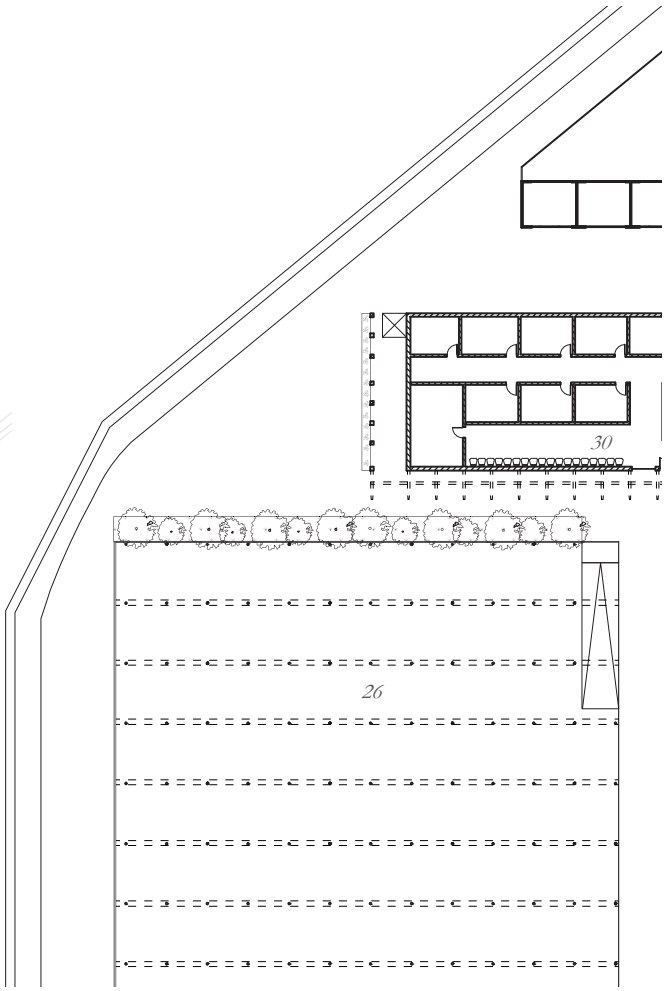
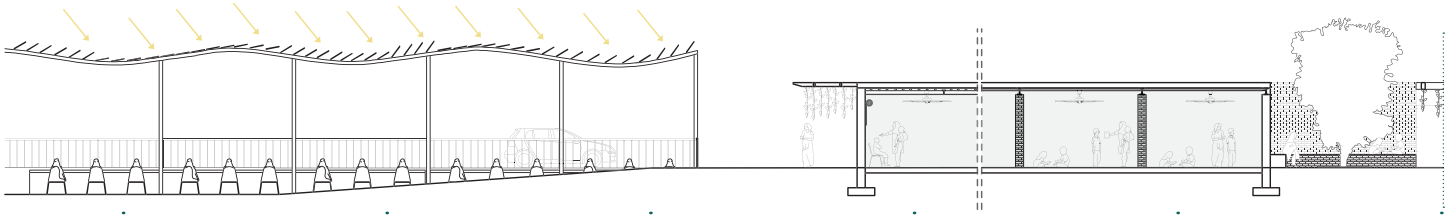
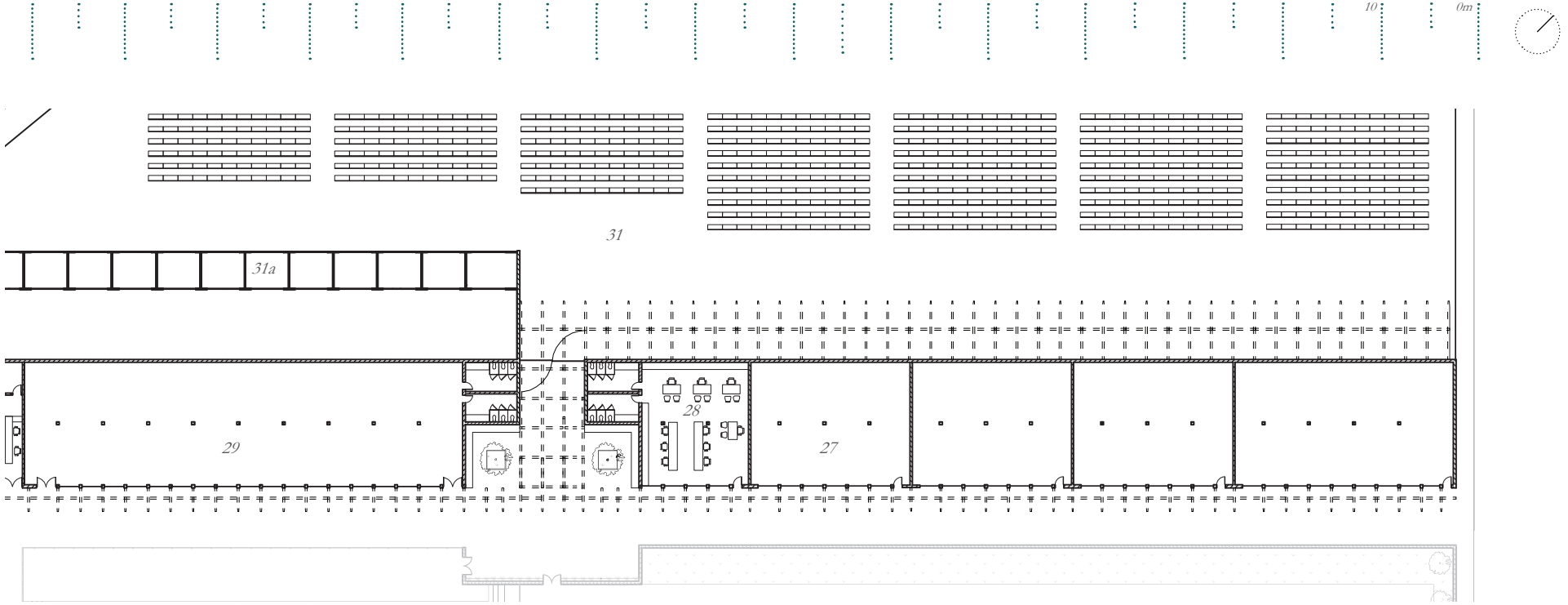


fig.79 Plan of Zone E (right)

fig.80 Section of Zone E (below)

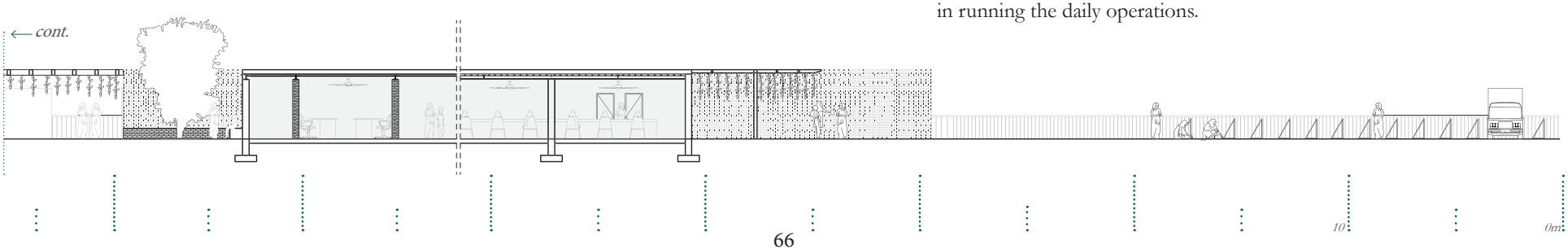




Day care | 29: This northern band of program includes a large day care which will allow the part time female workers to leave their kids under professional supervision while they work in the hair separation or skin
drying area.

Clinic | 30: A secondary clinic is located by the leather processes to attend to any emergencies the women or children might face while working or playing. The clinic is also accessible by the street for ambulances and outside public.

Skin Drying | 31: In this space, women will take contracts from tanneries to have the animal skins dried. It will be a designated space for this purpose only so that tanneries are forced to bring all the animal skins to be dried here. Tanneries will drop off the skins [a]at a designated time and have them dried, sorted and ready to be picked up once they are done. In this way, tanneries will pay for having the work done in an organized and sanitary manner. Currently, children are employed by the tanneries which will be prohibited. All the work would have to be contracted to the women who live in and around the facility. It will be a service that the compound will provide to the tanneries for a fee that will help in running the daily operations.



Rain water cistern (enclosed with manhole for access) collects water and supplies water to washrooms .

Rain water collects in the water channel through down spouts from adjacent buildings, and filters through gravel before flowing into the cistern for storage

Planting beds work as rainwater infiltration zones and are directly connected to the water channel.

fig.81 Perspective section of religious centre showing rain water collecting system

Sustainability

Rain water collection system: Kasur experiences an average annual rainfall of 424mm[98]. The heaviest rainfall months are July and August which bring in about 160mm of rainfall[99]. The compound is equipped with rainwater cisterns which collect and filter the rainwater to be used in the washrooms and kitchens. The water will be filtered by layers of plantation, gravel and sand to ensure natural filtering processes.

Solar power: To make the facility self sustainable, the market ($111m^2$) and the hair separation ($4,239m^2$) spaces are equipped with canopies covered with solar power collecting cells. These two spaces will provide energy for running the facility and will prove extremely helpful during times of power losses. Punjab experiences extreme power cuts where the power is out for about 10-12 hours per day.

The roofs of all the buildings can be equipped with solar collecting cells to provide more energy which can be sold to nearby communities. This project can be phased when funding is available. In the long run, it will help financially sustain the operations of the compound.

The solar energy collected by the canopies will be used for providing cell phone charging services by the main entrance on the south western part of the site. The local community of Kasur will be charged a small fee depending on the amount of time they spend charging their phone. This will help in engaging the community and providing an ongoing funding strategy to the facility.

Solar power heater: The water used in the compound for bathing and cooking will be heated by a solar power heater.

Gardens: The courtyards and the walls of the compound are landscaped to emphasize the direction of travel or moments of pause within the day. The trees planted are a combination of lime, mango and Indian Rosewood.

To reduce the effect of the smells of the chemicals and waste produced by the leather tanning process in the area, the circulation spaces are lined with Arabian Jasmine, mint and rose bushes.

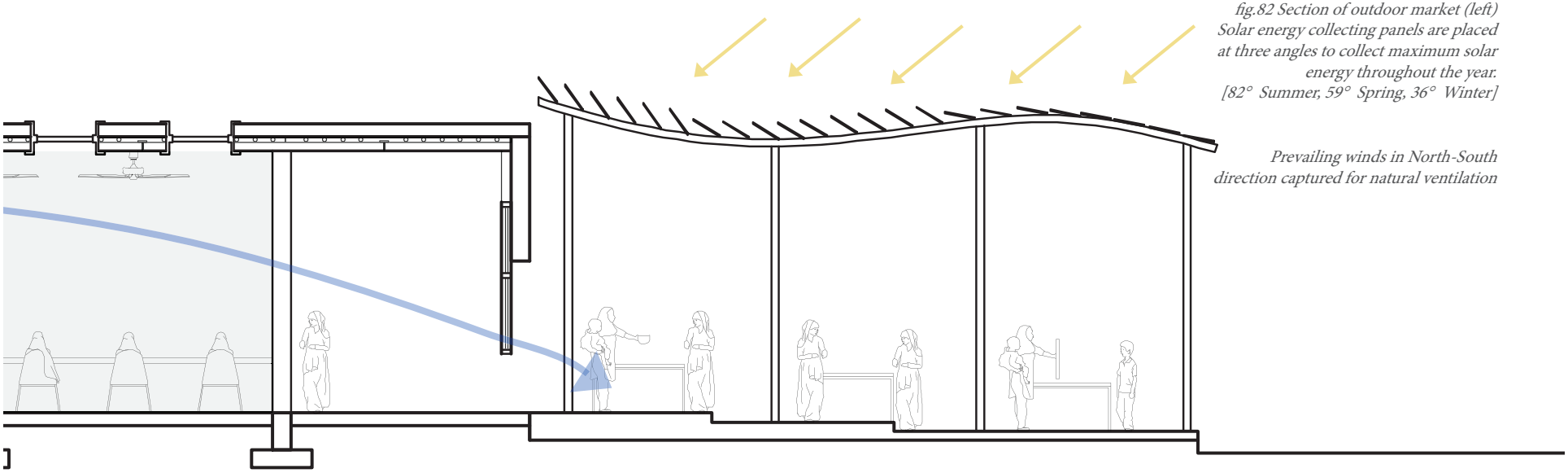


fig.82 Section of outdoor market (left)
Solar energy collecting panels are placed at three angles to collect maximum solar energy throughout the year.
[82° Summer, 59° Spring, 36° Winter]

Prevailing winds in North-South direction captured for natural ventilation

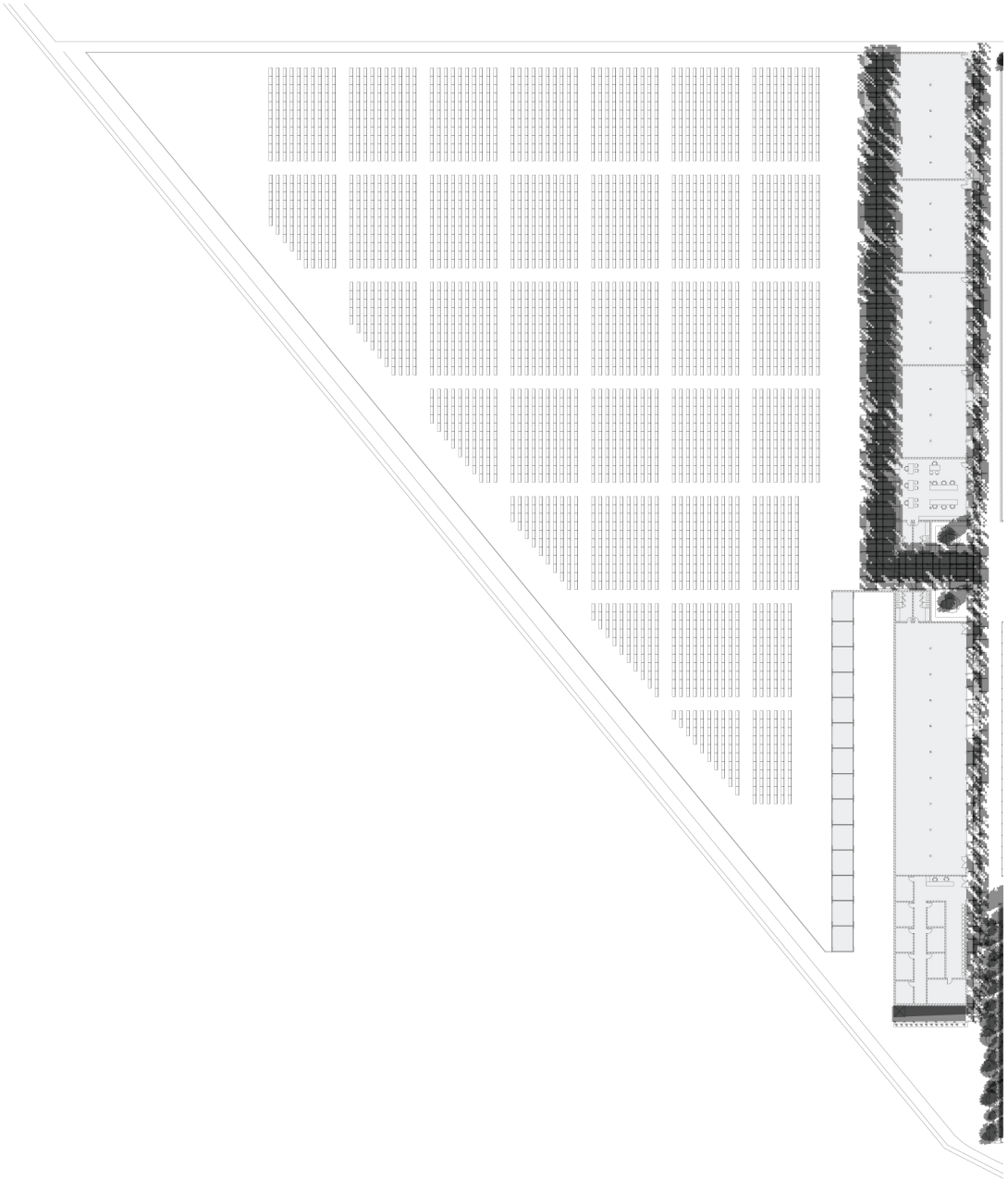
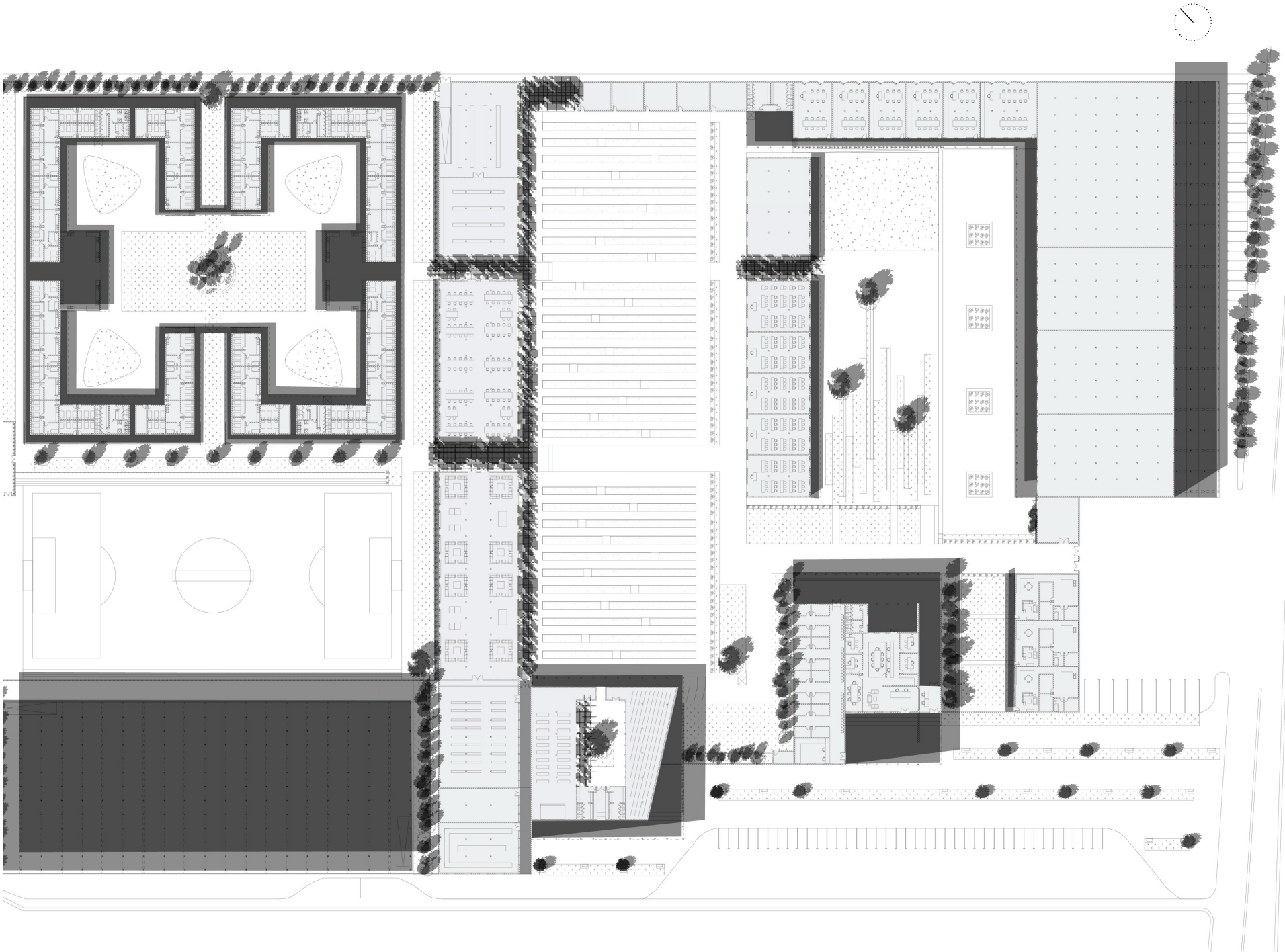


fig.83 Plan of shaded areas

12:00pm

04:00pm



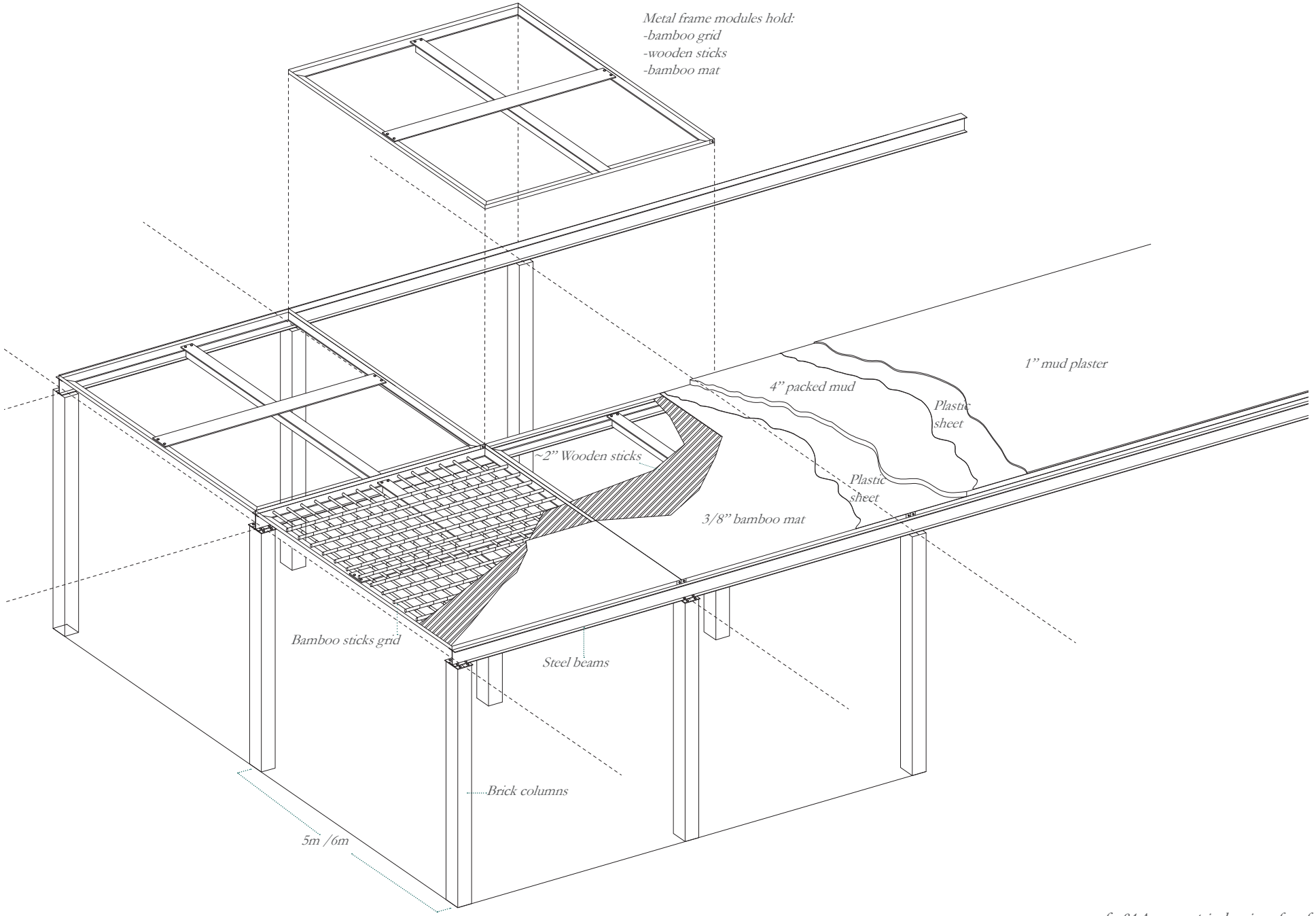


fig.84 Axonometric drawing of roof structure

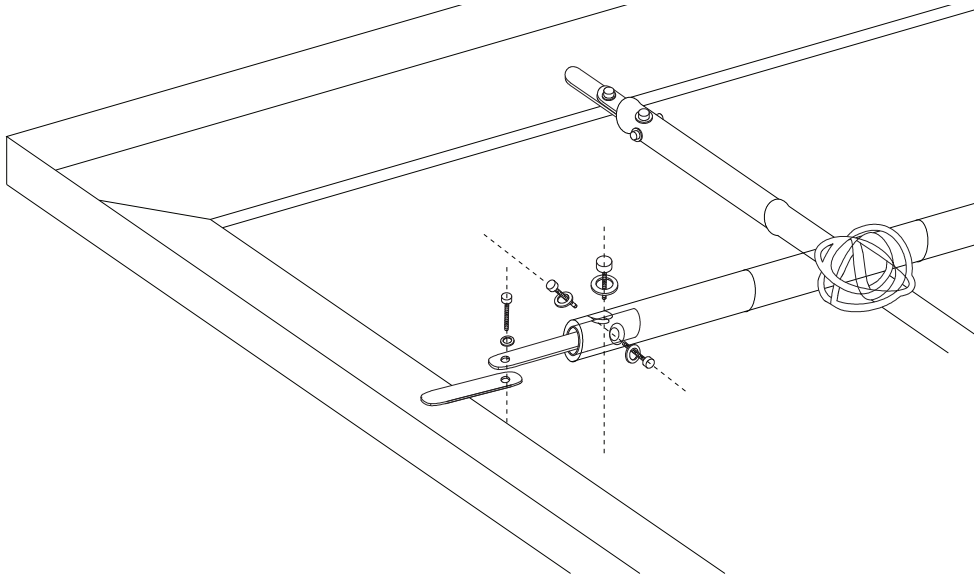
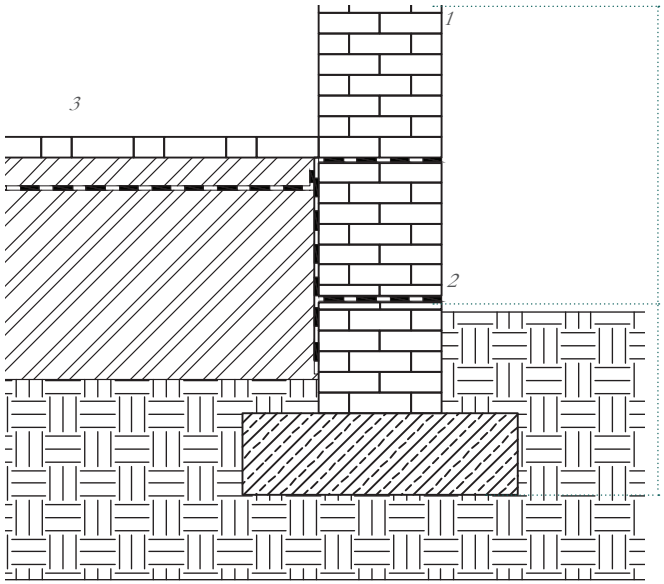


fig. 85 Metal fastener joint for bamboo grid with metal frame. Bamboo rods are tied to each other at the cross-section with rope



1. Above ground foundation:
-Layer of bricks
-Bitumen waterproofing membrane (raised 600mm from ground to prevent effects of flood damage)
-Brickwork [600mm]
-Bitumen waterproofing membrane (to prevent uprising humidity from the Earth)

2. Underground foundation:
-Brickwork [300mm]
-Cement stabalized rammed earth [300mm]

3. Flooring:
- Bricks
-Rammed Earth
-Bitumen waterproofing membrane
-Rammed earth

fig.86 Foundation detail

Construction

The buildings are all built with bricks which are abundantly produced around the site. During my visit to the site, I could see 5 brick stacks in operation within a 5 km radius from the site. The construction of the compound will employ the local brick makers and help to financially support their families.

The brick column spacing within the buildings ranges from 5m to 6m depending on the size of the program. The roof structure rests on the columns and is a combination of Earth, bamboo and steel. The columns support 250mm deep steel beams which are attached by bolted metal plates. The beams hold up framed modules of bamboo joists, a bamboo mat and a plastic sheet. These modules will be constructed off site and brought to the site for easy installation. The modules are then covered up with layers of earth, plastic and clay plaster.

The flooring in the compound is also bricks which sit on rammed Earth and a layer of waterproofing membrane.

The foundations of the buildings are 900mm deep (approximately 3ft). The assembly of the foundation is brickwork sandwiched by waterproofing membrane which sits on a 300mm slab of cement stabilized rammed Earth. The purpose of two waterproofing membranes is to prevent uprising humidity from damaging the foundations and to prevent any water damage in the case of a flood.

fig.87 Family living and working at a brick kiln in Kasur city

Conclusion

In order for the proposal to be grounded in reality, some funding strategies need to be discussed and evaluated.

Beginning

Site

Currently, the site is a government owned property and is being used by the tanneries for drying the chemical soaked animal hides and for the hair shaving and separation process. The land is not being leased by the tanneries, rather just put to use because it is currently empty. Acquiring the land could be done in two ways. One, the government could donate the land for this private venture or sell it to a private investor. The political party in charge may see this as an opportunity for a social investment or to gain popularity amongst the locals.

Building the foundations

The money for building the institution can come from a number of avenues. According to the World Bank data, 42 per cent of Pakistan's national income is owned by the top 20 per cent[100] of the total population of 179 million[101]. The poorest 10 per cent of the population only receives 4 per cent of the national income and earn an average income per head of $400 per annum. After distributing the national income amongst the income levels in Pakistan according to the statistics, a great socio-economic disparity can be seen where 0.001 per cent of the population owns as much wealth as the combined wealth of the poorest 18 million people of Pakistan[102].

People belonging to the top 20 per cent of the income pyramid reside in the high and premium income levels of society. This social top tier is more than often looking to invest in private ventures either as a form of an investment for a return or purely for charity based reasons. Since majority of Pakistan's population is Muslim, they actively donate to charity as part of their faith in God. In Islam, every Muslim is obliged to donate 2.5 per cent of their wealth annually to charity. This mandatory donation is known as *Zakat*[103] and is not the only amount people give to charity each year.

The institution can be advertised in the concept phase to high and premium income levels to encourage them to actively participate and donate for empowering women.

Energy

The solar energy component of the project is a large one which will require a significant initial capitol. The project can be phased to avoid delays in opening the facility to women and children. The different phases of purchasing and installing the photovoltaic equipment can be funded by different corporations as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) requirement. The skill development institution would provide in return of their contribution, marketing opportunities; such as branding and naming buildings within the compound. The companies' logos and information for sponsorship will also be advertised on the institutes' brochures.

In this manner, corporations can help fund portions of the operations. Initially, the market and the hair separation areas can be funded by two big major corporations. Eventually, a solar powered water heater can be purchased by the help of a different corporation.

The electrical fans that will be used in the compound can also be funded by a well-known fan manufacturer or any other corporation for the same marketing opportunities.

Sustenance

For the ongoing maintenance of the facility, there are many ways the management can acquire financial support. There are two main streams which the institute can run on. They are 1. internal funding strategies, and 2. external funds acquisition.

Internal funding strategies

Women at the institute will develop skills to produce products that will be sold in the outdoor market. These products will be quality controlled and be an important source of revenue for the compound.

As the solar energy collection phases develop, the energy stored can be sold to the local community of Kasur, for a small fee, through the cell phone charging stations. People will have the opportunity to charge their communication devices during power cuts or stop by on the way in the middle of a journey.

The institute will charge leather tanneries for the services of hair shaving, separation and drying animal hides. Currently, the tanneries employ young children on short contracts for a very nominal wage. Leather tanneries will be banned from using empty lots for these purposes and will have to obtain the service from this institute or future phased expansions of the compound.

As there may be some women who are currently employed in these services and may not choose to live in the facility, their wages will be provided by the HR office in the institute. Now they will be employed by the institute as part-time workers rather than by the tanneries.

External funds acquisition

External funds can continue to be acquired from various corporations as part of their CSR (corporate social responsibility) requirements. They will be offered branding and marketing opportunities for lesser fees than what they would normally spend on.

During the month of Ramadan in the Islamic calendar, the locals of Kasur can be encouraged to provide food for the breaking of the fast for all the women and children living in the compound. The food for the whole month would be donated by various members of the community.

As part of the charity obligation, the institute can advertise to accept *Zakat* money for funding its operations and for empowering and housing disadvantaged women and children.

Political parties can also be approached for funding and donations as they are always looking for ways to gain popularity in their hometowns.

Many foreign merchandise designers are looking for cheaper methods of producing their products to obtain higher profits. Currently, there are many fashion designers in the US who train women and out source the production of their designs to disadvantaged women in Pakistan. They sell these products sometimes at 6-7 times the cost of production. Designers can approach the facility to organize and send a trainer to train the women for a specific number of days. Each person, the facility will appoint to a designer will be charged a suitable wage and cost of materials for the products.

In this way, different methods of production can be learnt and applied to produce beautiful products of higher quality. It will also be a way of spreading cultural diversity by learning various handicraft skills within a smaller setting.

Reflection

Remediation

The first step towards remediation of the social problems addressed in the introduction of the thesis is providing the women with a place and the strength to leave behind their abusive past. To do this, the skill development institution needs to maintain a strong counselling program. This counselling program will include personality and self-esteem building classes. Through these lessons, the women can actively participate in a comfortable environment where everyone around them has experiences of a similar nature.

The institute needs to create a positive environment which will encourage women and children alike to strive for a better and brighter future for themselves.

Women will also be given short lessons on the law and their rights within society which will help in building their confidence.

The management and staff of the institute needs to maintain a strong ethical and professional attitude with the residents and external local community of Kasur.

The security personnel needs to take the security of the compound very seriously. They should not be allowed to permit anyone in and out of the compound outside of visiting hours and need to be very careful about the people they let in.

Everyone involved in the endeavour needs to be whole-heartedly committed to providing the young women and children with a better life. Once everyone's goals are in tune, the success of the proposal is guaranteed.

Expansion

The skill development institution can expand its program in phases overtime. The compound can adapt and grow to accept new demands with a growing population. Future phases of the project can include a livestock pen, acquiring more and bigger spaces for animal hide drying purposes. Future phases regarding solar energy collecting can expand to all the roofs of the buildings. This will help in collecting enough solar energy that can support the running operations and also be sold to the nearby community.

The proposal can also expand to other cities once it proves to be successful. The proposal can be adopted in existing shelter homes in smaller sizes or be an independent project on its own.

Controversy

The proposal questions and raises many issues that may seem controversial and hard to adopt in the current situation of the city. However, it is extremely important to challenge these social constraints to help abolish the abusive, patriarchal system currently practiced in the lower tier of the social pyramid.

One of the controversial issues is the idea of women being the sole supporter of a family who leaves the comfort of her home to earn a living. In the current situation, it is not easy to let go of the social norms and adopt an independent lifestyle. However, providing the women with a healthy and strong outlet is the first step towards changing the attitudes of the people towards this gender bias.

Secondly, the proposal is suggesting coeducation for young boys and girls. In a conservative city like Kasur, this raises many concerns. Nevertheless, young children should be exposed to each other at a younger age to avoid the social implications of a society where they are not allowed to interact. Allowing children to study together in the presence of their mothers will help foster a healthier and respectful attitude towards the opposite sex.

Another important issue the proposal raises is the coexistence of two religions. Firstly, the mosque and church both share the same courtyard, circulation and service spaces. The religious buildings are deliberately designed in this manner to encourage interaction between different groups at the time when they are most defensive and intolerant about differing beliefs. The proposal suggests praying alongside each other with views into each others prayer spaces through a transparent courtyard to encourage tolerance amongst the two religious groups. The courtyard allows for social exchange before and after prayer, which will help create a friendlier environment within the holy spaces.

The mosque is also designed to be used for men and women to pray alongside each other without a physical barrier. This definitely raises an issue of concern for the locals of the city. However, it is important to educate the people on the historical references regarding modesty and segregation during prayer to help foster a healthier attitude towards the opposite gender.

All of the points mentioned above are crucial towards achieving a bigger goal; i.e. raising awareness about women's rights and providing support to helpless families. Without intending to challenge the societal norms, one can only hope for a small change to follow.

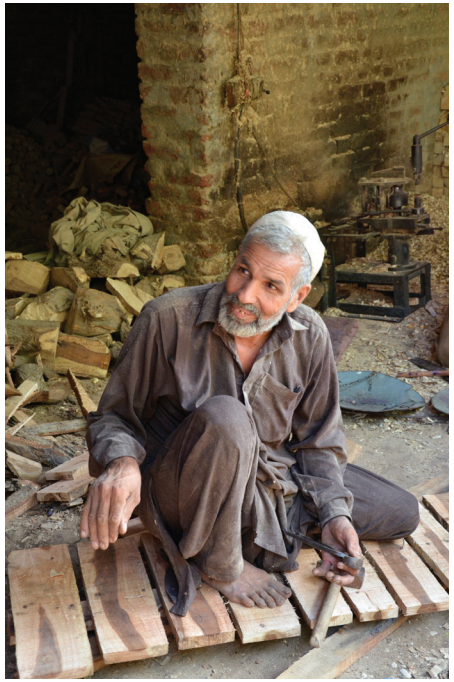
Lady carrying groceries in Kasur Railway station

Appendix

A collection of images from the visit to Kasur city.

HBL
ATM

مسافر خانہ
SUZUKI



SUZUKI
SALE
51%

Notes

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