Refugee Village Masterplan
by
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Client
The Hellenic Republic

Project Statement:

The unfolding refugee crisis has prompted governments to adopt easy-to-build, temporary housing types to house the waves of migrants while their requests for asylum are processed. However, even the most efficient shelters currently being produced are guaranteed in their aggregate to cause significant damage to the environment, including carbon dioxide emissions during manufacture, and toxicity to the earth resulting from disposal.

A proposal is presented which envisages the creation of processing centers in Turkey, Jordan, Greece, Italy and other crisis 'hot spots', employing 'zero-impact' environmental techniques and using a traditional urban model to create humane, welcoming settings for migrants who have fled violence in their home towns.

Refugees would find temporary quarters while waiting to be processed, complete with health- and child-care services, refectories, clothing dispensaries, laundry facilities, etc. Their first experience in transitioning to Europe would thus be welcoming and civilized.

Buildings would be constructed using upgraded adobe techniques (sun-dried brick), which are familiar in Syria and other countries of the Middle East. Adobe buildings are cheap, easy to produce, quick to assemble, and highly ecological, as they do not generate deleterious amounts of carbon dioxide during production and handling, nor do they leave toxic or other hazardous waste when discarded.

They are also highly durable, permitting eventual re-purposing of the processing centers as affordable housing, academic villages, or resort communities. The ability to re-purpose makes the proposal attractive for investment, which can count on eventual capital returns.