CONSTRUCTION MANUAL









HABITAT FOR HUMANITY NEPAL

Habitat For Humanity Nepal is a non profit organization building simple, decent and affordable housing in partnership with people in need.

In 1997, Habitat for Humanity started operating in Nepal by working directly with the local communities in five districts. By 2005, more than 800 families were served through decent housing. To increase its impact, Habitat Nepal began to leverage on partnerships with non-government organizations, microfinance institutions, and village lending and saving groups. In July 2011, the "Meaningful Life through Housing" campaign was launched to provide sustainable housing through a people-driven approach and cost-effective construction technology. Operations focused on building decent homes incrementally with rural families in eastern and western Nepal. More than 54,000 families have had strength, stability and self-reliance with HFH Nepal until the devastating earthquakes struck in April and May 2015.

Habitat's vision: A world where everyone has a decent place to live.

Mission: Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities and hope.

- Focus on shelter.
- Advocate for affordable housing.
- Promote dignity and hope.
- Support sustainable and transformational development.

Habitat Nepal is committed to building homes and hope in both disasteraffected and non-affected areas across the country.

For your Feedback please call our toll free number 16600133332

or Email us at - feedback@habitat.org

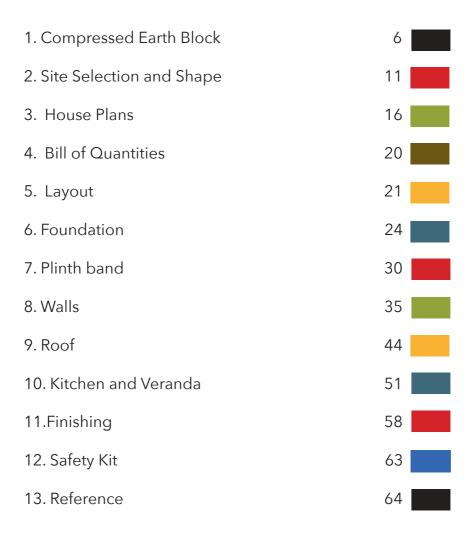


ABOUT THE MANUAL

This construction manual outlines the techniques and procedures adopted for the construction of the Compressed Earth Block (CEB) house designed and developed by Habitat for Humanity Nepal. It intends to serve as a guide and a reference source for the readers interested or involved in the construction of the house. Since the manual only provides the general and the most important parameters of the construction, the readers who are interested or planning on building with CEB are strongly recommended to consult a trained mason or get technical advice before deciding and use trained masons while building.

On the same note, this manual is also not intended as a substitute for training on CEB house construction.



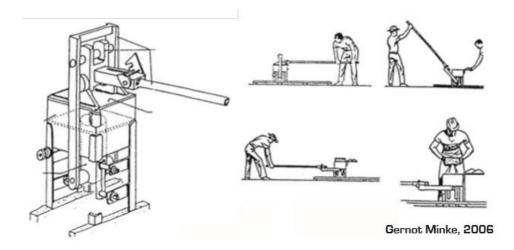


1.1 INTRODUCTION

The house in this manual is 21' x 21' [441 sq. ft.] It is a non incremental single storey house with two rooms of 12'4" X 8'9", a kitchen of 6'1" x 9'10" and a veranda of the same dimensions. It is composed by a core rectangular structure made out of compressed earth blocks and reinforced vertically with re-bars and horizontally through concrete banding at floor, sill and lintel levels. The kitchen and veranda have a light bamboo structure. The walls of the kitchen and gables are made out of woven bamboo and mud plaster (wattle and daub). The roofing structure is made out of bamboo, with bamboo mats for insulation and CGI sheets as roofing cover. Bamboo is a sustainable building material very suited for the construction of a house in different regions of Nepal.

1.2 WHAT IS COMPRESSED EARTH BLOCK?

Compressed earth blocks, also known as compressed soil blocks are a construction material made out of soil and a stabilizing material, such as lime, cement or clay, which is then compressed together through a mechanical press.





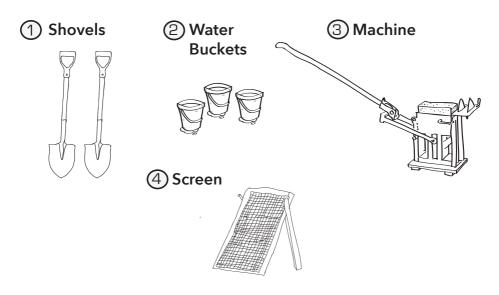
1.3 WHY BUILD WITH COMPRESSED EARTH BLOCKS?

- Use locally available material; soil, hence reducing the transportation cost and contributing to environmental effort.
- It contributes in keeping the local economy alive.
- Consistency in the quality of the material.
- It can be very easily assimilated.
- CEB structures are considered to be warm, solid and environmentally friendly.

• Since it uses sub soils of the earth leaving the exploitation of the top soil important for the agricultural purpose, it does not affect the ecological and occupational aspect.

- They are renewable resources that are found in abundance.
- CEB walls are sound proof, fire proof, bug proof and mold proof.
- Since the CEB blocks are made of natural material that do not emanate any toxic chemicals, it is a non-toxic building material.
- They are long lasting and durable.
- It can withstand seismic activities using steel reinforcements.

1.4 TOOLS NEEDED



1.5 CONSTRUCTION PROCESS

1.5.1 The mix

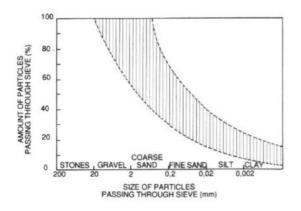
The soil used for the fabrication of CEB consists of gravel, sand and clay mixed with water and occasionally with stabilizing materials such as lime or cement. The gravel and sand give strength to the material while the clay binds it together.

The proportions of the soil for adequate fabrication of CEB vary considerably, so it is always recommended to try different mixtures and test them.

We will first test the soil of our land. If it is not appropriate we will add sand, clay or gravel depending on what is missing.

To increase its strength we could add 5% of cement.

The Earth institute of France (CRA-Terre) recommends the soil to be inside the following proportions



PROPORTIONS OF VARIOUS KINDS OF MATERIAL

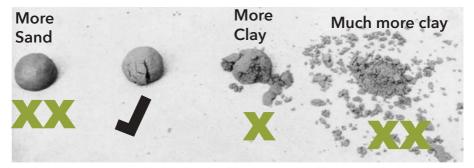
Gravels: 0 - 40% Sands: 25 - 80% Silts: 10 - 25% Clays: 8 - 30%

On site tests

There are many on site tests we can do to get a right mix but probably the easiest is the ball dropping test.

Ball dropping test

Make a ball of 4cm of diameter of your soil as dry as possible, yet wet enough to be formed. Drop it to the floor from a height of around 1.5m



Gernot Minke, 2006

1.5.2 Steps

1 Screening



The appropriate soil is sifted through $1/4^{\circ}$ to $3/8^{\circ}$ inch wire screen





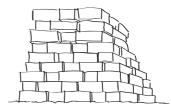
We then mix the soil adding a 10-12% moisture content

(3) Making the bricks



The soil is then compressed and moulded forming bricks.

④ Drying



The bricks are then stacked and covered from the sun and left untouched for around 2-3 weeks to dry. If exposed to the sun, they will develop cracks.

2 | SITE SELECTION AND SHAPE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

It is important that the house is built in a safe location.

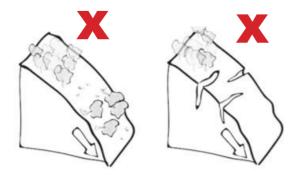
"Choose a safe location for your house. Even if you can't choose, there are still things you can do." (Shelter CLuster. 10 Key Messages).

2.2 CHOOSE A SAFE SITE

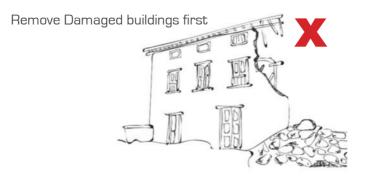
Avoid flood prone areas, like the bottom of valleys or near river beds



Don't build on steep slopes. Look for landslide signs (cracks, fallen trees).



2 | SITE SELECTION AND SHAPE



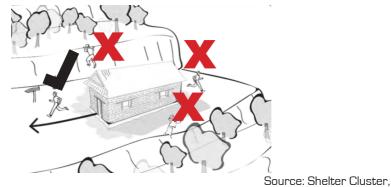
2.3 POSITION YOUR HOUSE SAFELY

Keep a safe distance between your house and slopes or cliffs.



2.4 HAVE AN ESCAPE PLAN

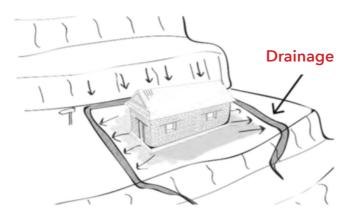
Ensure safe escape for everybody from the site. Have a preparedness plan, which includes all occupants and family members.



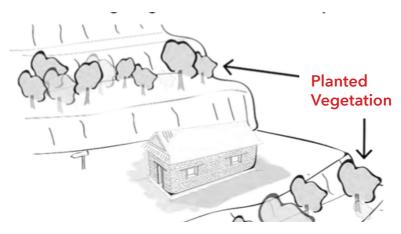
2 SITE SELECTION AND SHAPE

2.5 MAKE YOUR SITE SAFER

Ensure proper water drainage of the site.



Plant retaining vegetation on the slope above

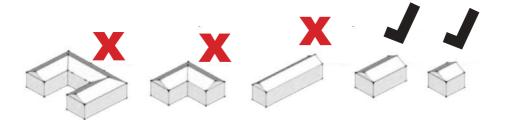


Source: Shelter Cluster, 10 Key Messages

2 | SITE SELECTION AND SHAPE

2.6 SHAPE

Use a regular shape that is not too narrow. U and L shapes will twist during earthquakes.



2.7 HEIGHT

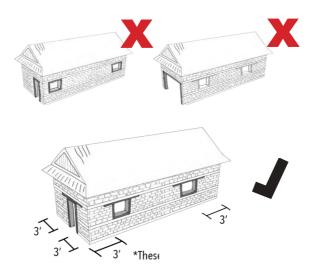
Don't build more than 2 storeys and an attic. One storey buildings are safer in an earthquake than taller buildings.



2 | SITE SELECTION AND SHAPE

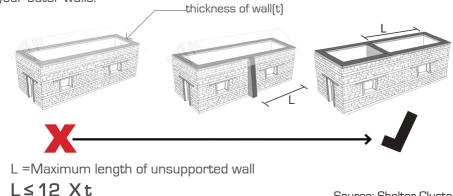
2.8 DOOR AND WINDOW OPENINGS

Large openings weaken a wall. Place openings away from corners and leave at least 3ft gap from corners and between openings



2.9 LONG WALLS NEED SUPPORT

For a longer house, use regular wall supports or buttresses. It is important to build any internal walls from the same strong material and thickness as your outer walls.

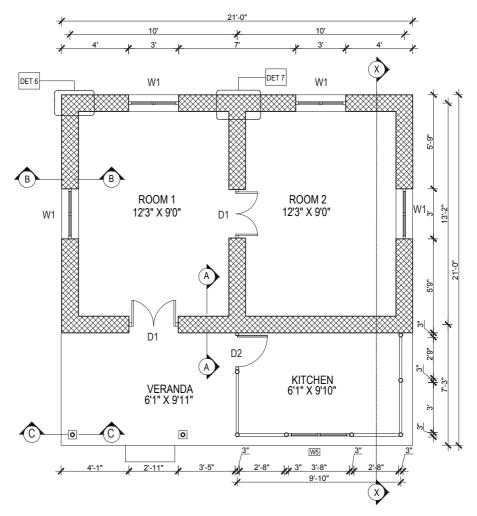


3 HOUSE PLANS

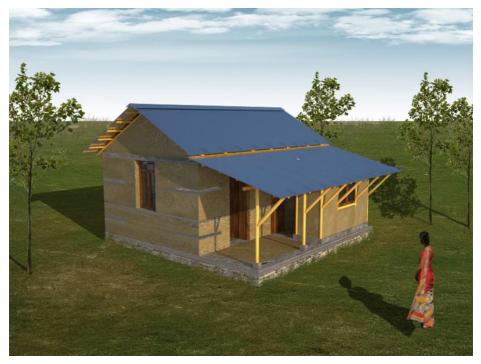
3.1 FLOOR PLANS

The house has two rooms, one kitchen and one veranda.

As the house is flexible and modular, the placements of the rooms can be interchanged as per the owners requirements. The placement of door/ window openings can also be altered as per the owners' requirements. However, the house should not stray away from features that makes the house earthquake resilient.



3 HOUSE PLANS



3D Render of the demonstration house



3.2 ELEVATIONS



Front Elevation

Side Elevation 1

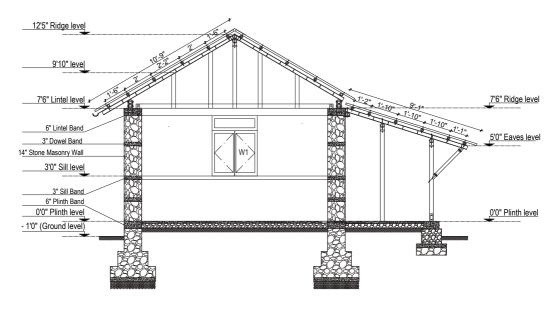


Side Elevation 2

Back Elevation

3 HOUSE PLANS

3.3 SECTION



Section X-X



4 | BILL OF QUANTITIES

4.1 CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS AND MANPOWER

Below is the list of materials and labours required to build the CEB and bamboo house. Re-use of materials already in the owner's possession is recommended to reduce the cost of the house.

Make sure to get an estimated cost of the materials and labours to ensure that there is enough funding to complete the construction.

	Up to plinth	Super Structure	Finishing work	TOTAL
MANPOWER				
Skilled Labour (Md)	30	75	30	136
Unskilled Labour(Md)	113	131	35	279
MATERIALS				
Cement (Bags)	65	21	15	101
Sand (Cu.m)	8	5	З	15
Aggregate (Cu.m)	З	3	-	6
Soil Blocks (No.)	-	6042	-	6042
Stone (Cu.m)	26	-	-	26
Wood (Cu.m)	0.043	0.221	-	0.264
Reinforcement (Kg)	289	385	-	674
3" dia Bamboo(Nos)	-	68	-	68
2.5" dia Bamboo(Nos)	-	45	-	45
2" dia Bamboo(Nos)	-	25	-	25
1.5" dia Bamboo(Nos)	-	32	-	32

4 BILL OF QUANTITIES

4.1 CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS AND MANPOWER

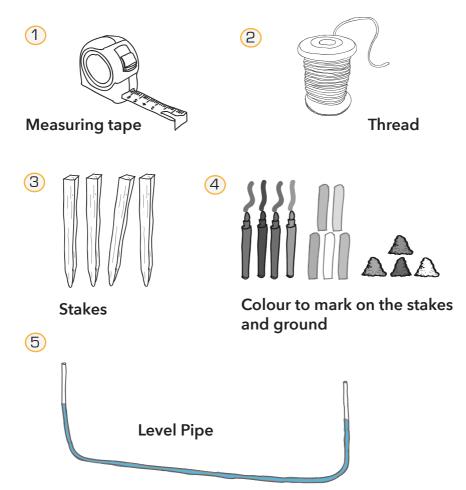
	Up to plinth	Super Structure	Finishing work	TOTAL
MATERIALS				
8mm bolts(Nos)	-	213	-	213
J Hooks(Nos)	-	177	-	177
CGI Sheets (Sq.m)	-	85	-	85
Hinge(Nos)	-	30	-	30
Cheskin(Nos)	-	15	-	15
Lockset(Nos)	-	4	-	4
Handle(Nos)	-	7	-	7

5 LAYOUT

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Once the site is selected and the dimensions of our house are known (Chapter 3)and our foundation (Chapter 6), start cleaning the site and doing the layout. The layout will guide the placement of our house. It is recommended to be done by 2-3 persons.

5.2 TOOLS NEEDED

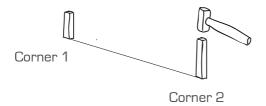


5 LAYOUT

5.3 STEPS

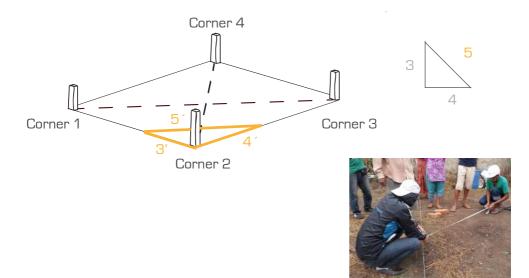
(1)

Measure out one side: Place stakes at each side (corners 1 and 2). Use a hammer or a similar tool to bang in the stakes.



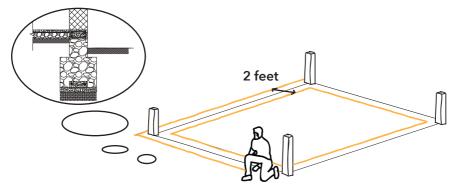
Use the 3-4-5 method to get the right angles: To find the right angle measure 3 feet on one side, 4 feet on the other and the diagonal joining them has to be 5 feet. Once the angle of 90° is obtained measure corner 3 and place another stake.

Repeat the same process in corners 3 and 4.

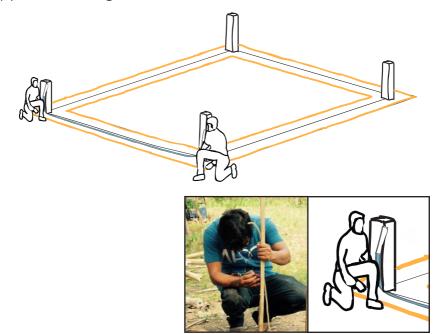


5 LAYOUT

Measure the thickness of the foundation: With a thread from stake to stake measure the thickness of the foundation and mark it with colour.



Level the land: it is very important to make sure the house and therefore the ground is levelled. Use a level pipe filled with water. With that level pipe mark the heights on the stakes.

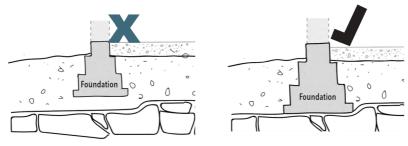


6.1 INTRODUCTION

The foundation of the house is made up of stone with cement mortar. "A house is stronger if it `s built on strong foundations" (Key Messages).

6.2 PRINCIPLES

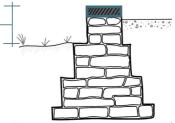
Make sure the foundation lays on firm ground. Don't build on soft ground. If there is soft ground, dig deeper to reach the firm ground.



Tie stones are esential to provide stability to the foundation. Add a plinth band to your foundation to increase its strength.

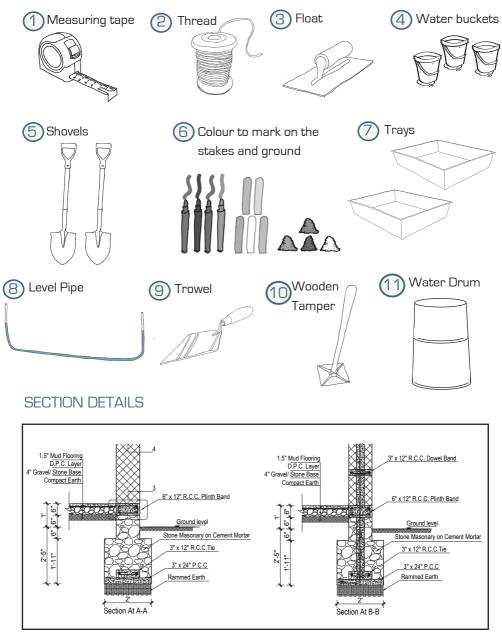


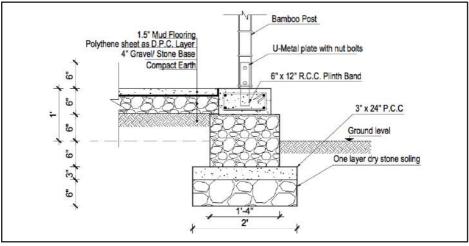
Plinth level should be at least 1' above external ground level and higher than past flood water level to stop water going inside the house



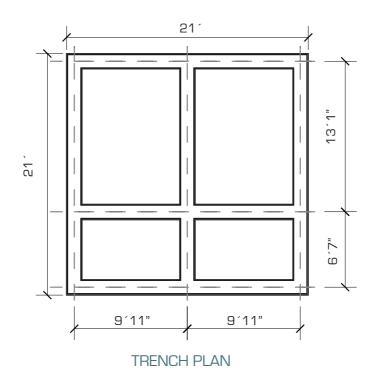
Source: Shelter Cluster, 10 Key Messages

6.3 TOOLS NEEDED





Section C-C



6.4 STEPS

First, dig a trench down to the firm ground (minimum 1.5' or as required). Then, place a layer of dry stone soiling.



2 Fill the gaps with gravel







NOTE: Ensure the foundation is levelled at each step. Once the PCC is laid the work should stop for 18-24hours and should be kept damp so it cures properly.



After pouring the layer of PCC, lay the stone foundation with cement mortar. For a strong foundation, ensure the wall is built following the stone wall principles shown below.



6.5 STONE WALL PRINCIPLES

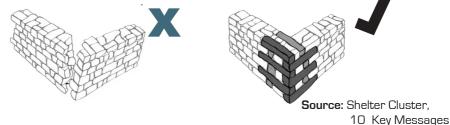
Use tie stones, as small stones can push the wall apart on an earthquake.
 Tie stone:.....

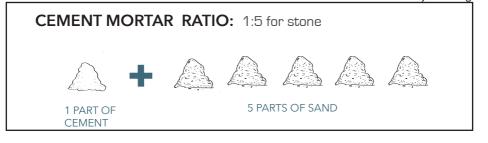


2 Use good materials. It is important to have big stones touching as much as possible.



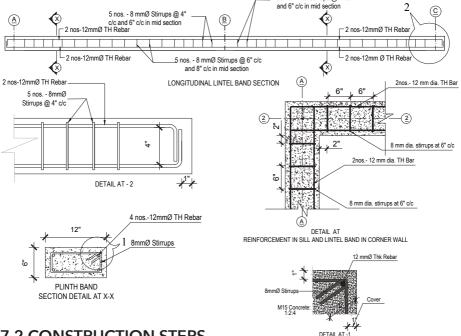
3 Corner stones strengthen the wall and help reduce the risk of corner collapse





7.1 INTRODUCTION

The plinth band of cement and steel bars gives strength and stability to the foundation and ties it together. The steel in the band are arranged as per the diagram below. 5 nos. - 8mmØ Stirrups @ 4" c/c



7.2 CONSTRUCTION STEPS

(1) At the same time the foundation is being built, prepare the reinforcing steel for the banding. Begin bending the stirrups and then the main bars.

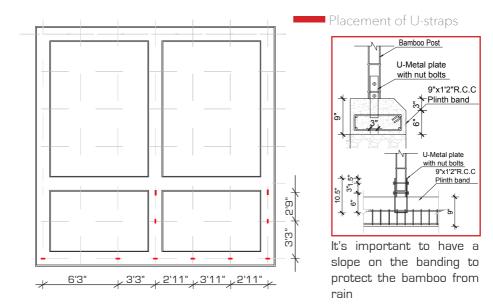




Place rebars and stirrups



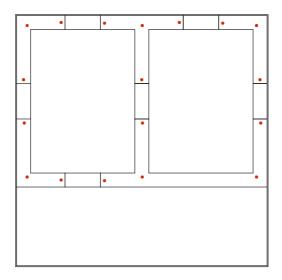
3 In the part of the kitchen and veranda, place U-Straps for connecting the bamboos to the foundation as shown below. The U-straps should be attached to the reinforcing steel.

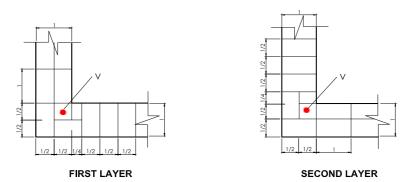




Picture: Connection between reinforcing steel and U-straps

Place the vertical steel reinforcement attached to the plinth band. It will be placed at corners, openings and junctions.





CORNER JUNCTION DETAILS FOR ONE BRICK WALL FOR PROVIDING VERTICAL STEEL.

NBC 203: 2015

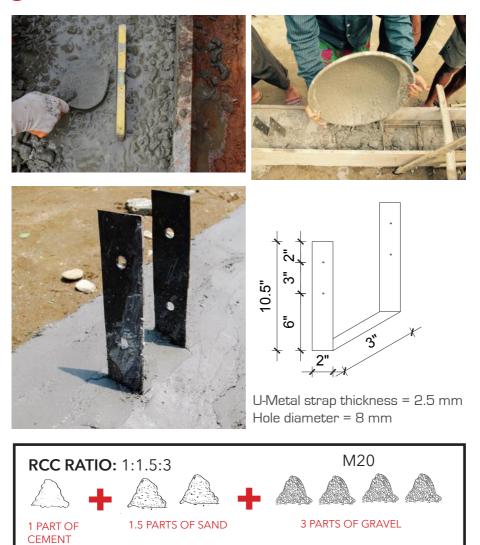
5 Once all the straps are in place or simultaneously proceed to place the form work. The formwork should fit tightly to the foundation so that the concrete mix when poured does not leak out.

Also, level the height of the concrete on formwork.





6 Mix and Pour the concrete.



NOTE: After 2 hours of laying of the concrete, when it has begun to harden it shall be kept damp for around 24hrs. No work should be done on top for at least 24 hrs to allow for concrete to fully set.



8.1 INTRODUCTION

The walls are made of RCC banding and compressed earth blocks.

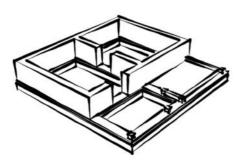
8.2 DOOR FRAMES

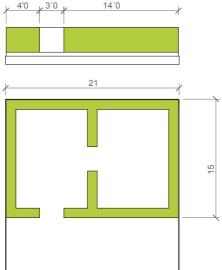
Before starting to build the wall place the door frames.



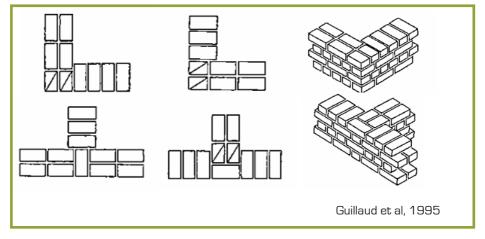
8.3 LAYING THE BRICKS

Once the bricks are ready, start laying them. Use mud or cement mortar to bind them together. The mud mortar should have the same mix as the bricks



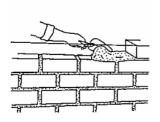


Example of brick patterns

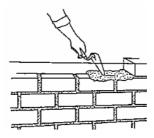


It is very important to tie corners and junctions well as they are one of the vulnerable areas of a masonry structure.





Place the right amount of mortar



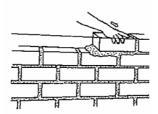
Spread the mortar uniformly



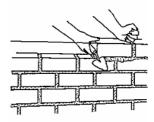
Wet the bricks before laying them



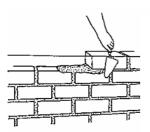
Place mortar on the faces to be joint



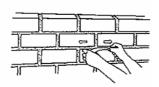
Lay the brick on the wall



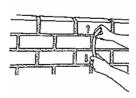
Stall the brick on its place



Remove the excess of mortar



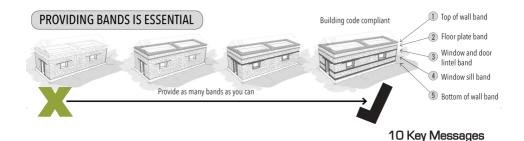
Smooth horizontal joints



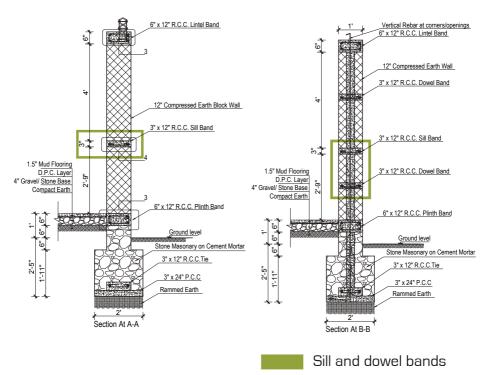
Smooth vertical joints

8.4 SILL, CORNER AND LINTEL BANDS

It is crucial, when building masonry structures to band your house.



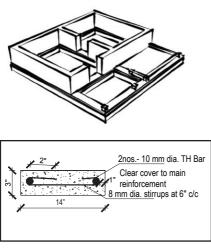
8.4.1. SECTIONS



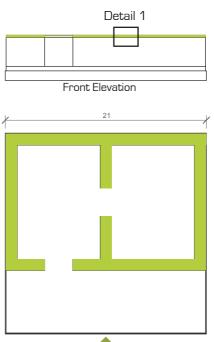
8.4.2 STEPS

8.4.2.1 Sill band

The sill band is the band that will go under the window. It is a continuous band all over the house. The height of this band is 75mm. Sill band of cement & steel bars gives strength and stability to the wall and ties it together. The steel in the band are arranged as per detail below.







- 1 Build the wall and prepare the reinforcing steel for the banding. Then begin bending the stirrups.
- Place rebars and stirrups



4) Pour concrete

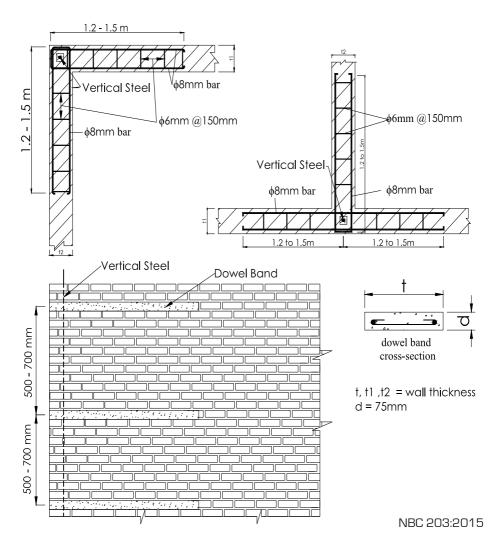


8.4.2.2 Window frames

Once the sill band is left to set for 24 hrs, place the window frames.

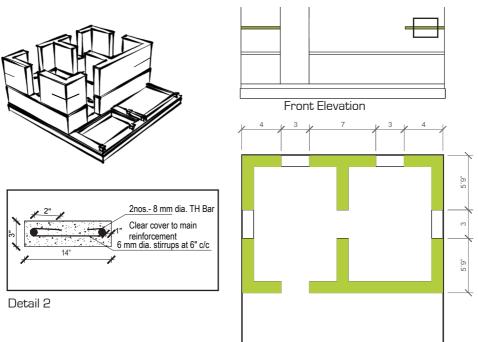
8.4.2.3 Dowel bands

The dowel bands go at mid height between the sill and plinth and sill and lintel band. These bands are placed on corner and junctions. The height of this band is 75mm.





Detail 2

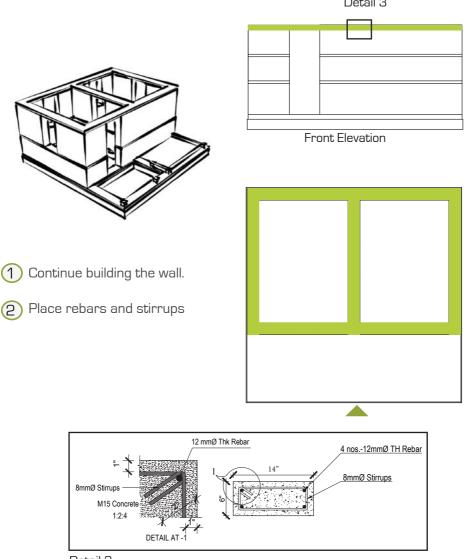


- 1 Continue building the wall.
- 2 Place rebars and stirrups
- (3) Place form work
- 4 Pour concrete

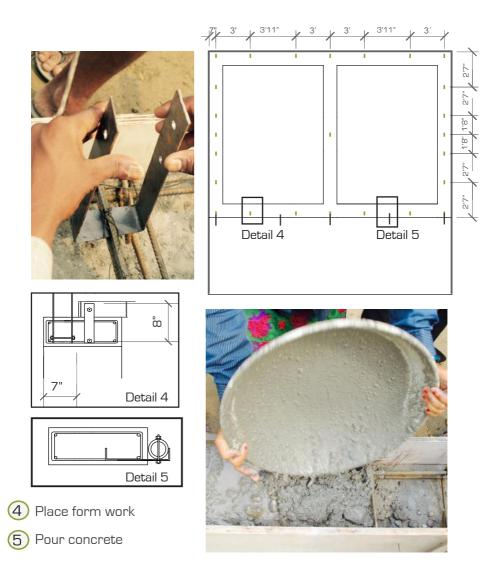


8.4.2.4 Lintel band

The lintel band will be our last band, placed at the top of the wall. The height of this band is 150mm. Detail 3



3 Place U straps where detailed on the plan below to connect the gable columns and the beams to the lintel band. On the same plane we will place straps for connecting the joists of the floor and an L strap will be placed for the beams of the stairs .

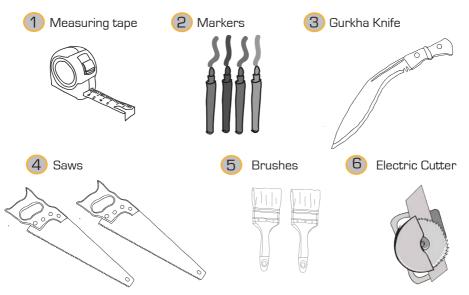




9.1 INTRODUCTION

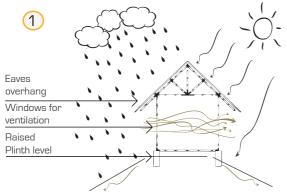
The roof is composed by a bamboo structure covered by CGI sheets

9.2 TOOLS NEEDED



9.3 BAMBOO DESIGN PRINCIPLES

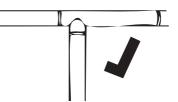
If the bamboo house is built using these principles, it will last longer; upto 50 years.



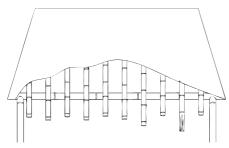
Bamboo should always be well protected from rain and sun. Moreover bamboo should be treated with a boron compound to be protected from fungi and insects and increase its durability.

The nodes are the strongest part of the bamboo and therefore it is very important to place them properly when building. Bamboo should be selected and cut so that the node is as close as possible to the connections.





3 It is crucial also that each bamboo of the structure finishes as close as possible to a node as this will protect the bamboo from cracks, moisture and degradation.



Source: Humanitarian Bamboo Guidelines



9.4 CONSTRUCTION STEPS

9.4.1 BAMBOO STRUCTURE. PART ONE

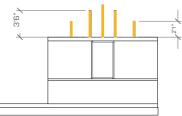
 Cut the columns and mark them.

> Optional: Apply 2 coats of varnish to protect the bamboo further and to give a nice finishing.(Picture 1)



Picture 1

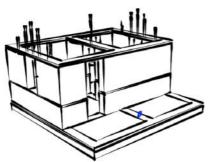
Bolt the columns to the metal straps. Ensure that there is a small gap (2-4 mm) between the bamboo base and the lintel band to stop the column from rotting.



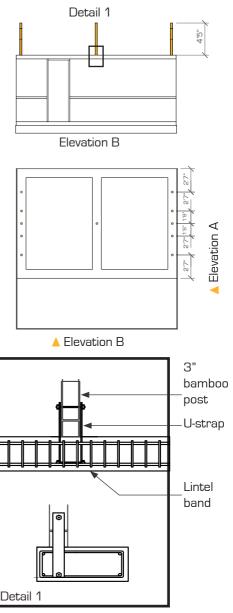


Columns:

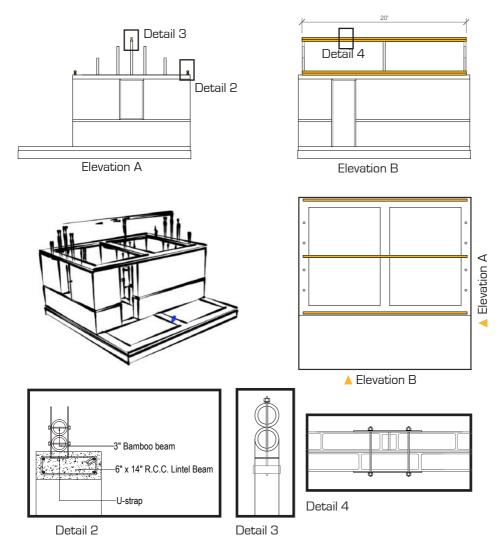
Sn.	Diameter	Length	Quantity
1	3"	4'5"	3
2	3"	3'6"	4
3	3"	2'1"	4





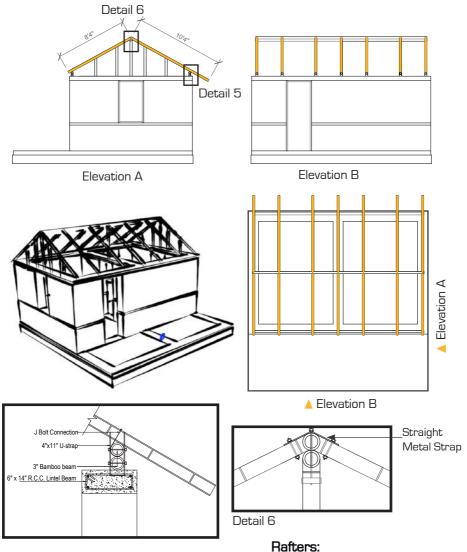


Bolt the beams to the columns with T-bolts (Detail 3) and to the lintel band with U-straps (Detail 2). The middle beam is composed of 2 members and are joined together using metal straps and bolts (Detail 4).



Sn.	ltem	Diameter	Length	Quantity
1	Beam	3"	20'	6

4 The next step is placing the rafters. The rafters will be joined to the beams and columns through metal straps and bolts as shown below.



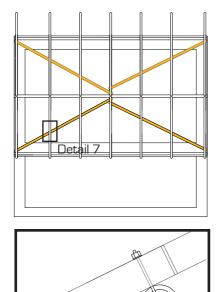
 Sn.
 Diameter
 Length
 Quantity

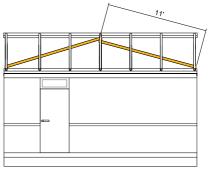
 1
 3"
 8'4"
 7

 2
 3"
 10'4"
 7

Detail 5

5 We then place the diagonal bracing. The diagonal bracing is crucial when building particularly in earthquake prone areas and during high winds as it will hold the structure together and stiffens it.



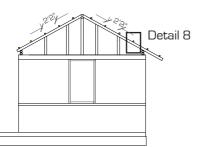


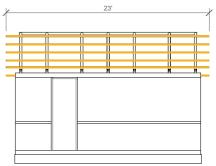


Detail 7

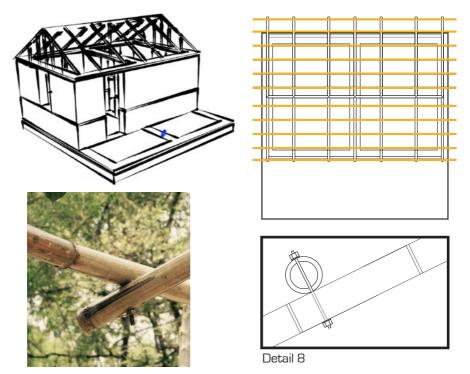
Connection between bracing and beam

6 Connect the purlins to the rafters using bolts as shown in detail 8.

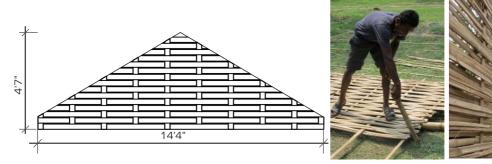




	Sn.	ltem	Diameter	Length	Quantity
	1	Bracing	2.5"	11'	4
.	2	Purlins	2"	23'	11



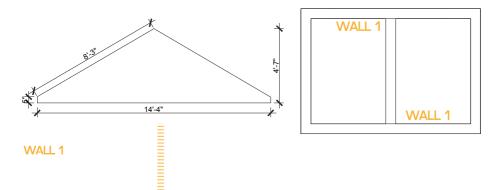
Once the bamboo structure of the roof is finalized, place the gable walls which are composed of bamboo weave and mud plaster. Build them aside and then put them in place to save time. Attach the walls to the bamboo structure from outside with wire/nails.



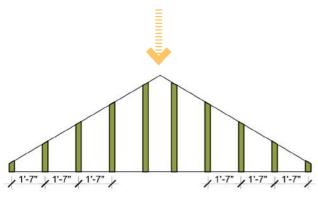
• Refer next page on how to build a woven bamboo wall.

Process of making bamboo walls:

1. Measure the length and height of the wall.



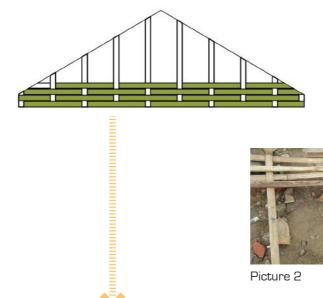
2. Cut the bamboo strips as per the dimensions and lay them on the ground. Lay the vertical members first at equal spacing or as per given dimensions. (Picture 1)





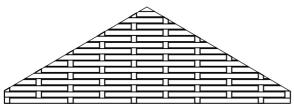
Picture 1

4. Start weaving the wall with bamboo strips horizontally one at a time. (Picture 2&3)





Picture 2





Picture 3

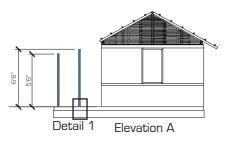
10.1 INTRODUCTION

The kitchen and veranda are composed by a bamboo structure. The kitchen is then covered with woven bamboo and mud.

10.2 CONSTRUCTION STEPS

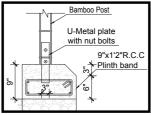


Attach the bamboo columns to the plinth band through the metal straps embedded in it.

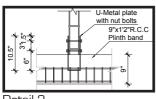


Columns:

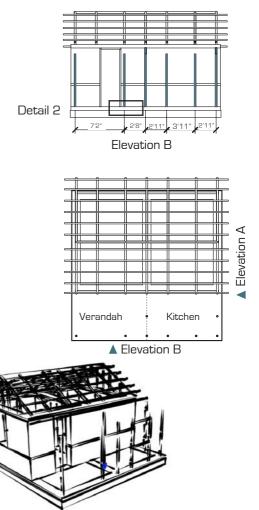
Sn.	Diameter	Length	Quantity
1	3"	5'6"	6
2	3"	6'6"	2



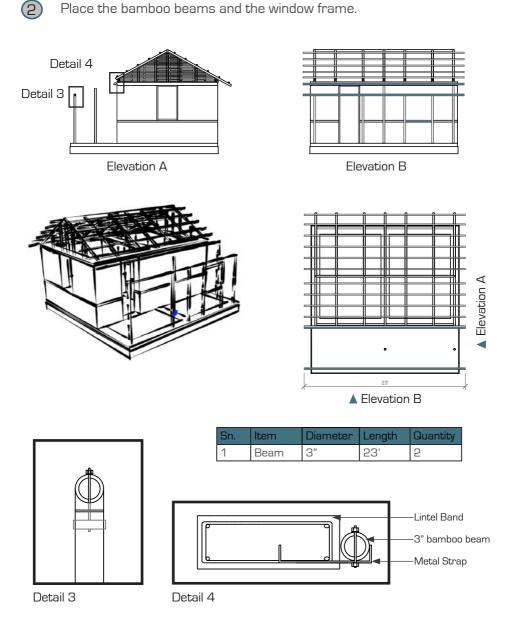
Detail 1



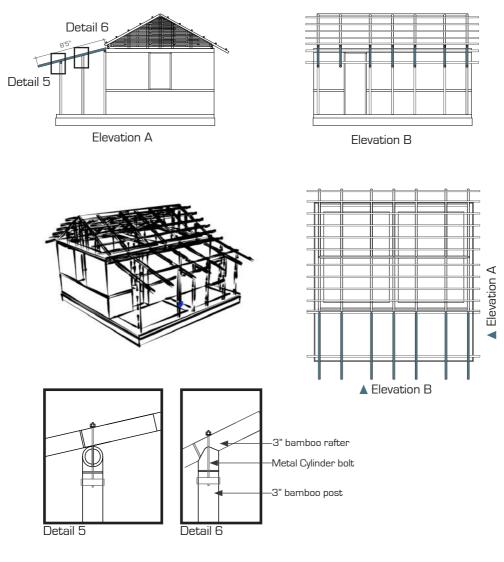
Detail 2



Place the bamboo beams and the window frame.

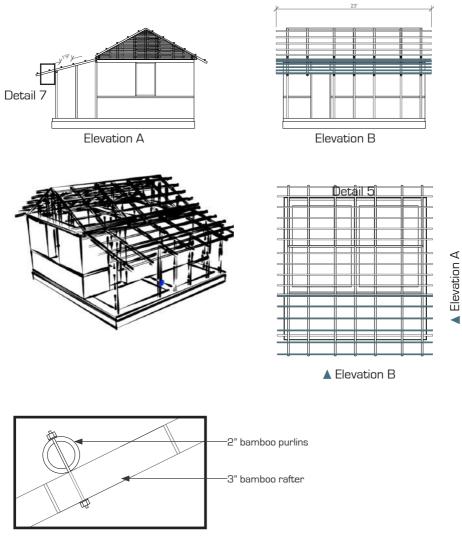


(3) Place the rafters and connect to beam and columns using nut bolts.



Sn.	ltem	Diameter	Length	Quantity
1	Rafters	3"	8'5"	7

4 Connect the purlins to the rafters with bolts as shown in detail 8.

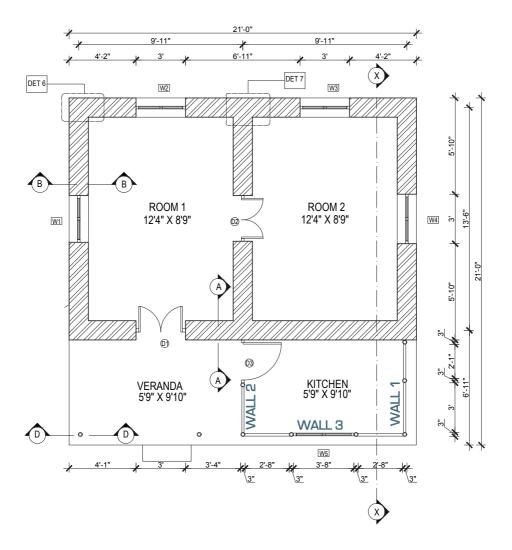


Detail 7

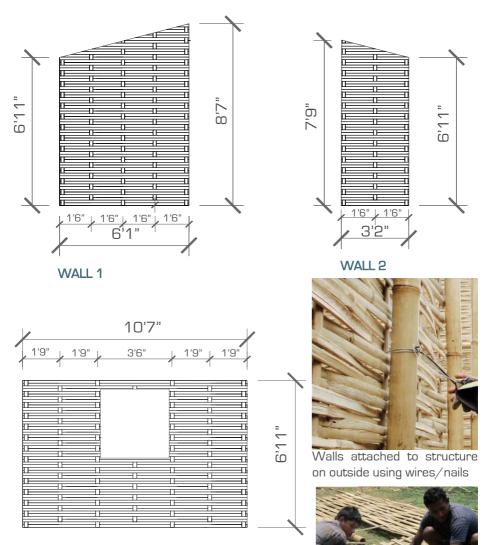
Sn.	ltem	Diameter	Length	Quantity
1	Purlins	2"	23"	6



(5) Now put the walls in place. The walls are build aside to save time. The walls should be attached to the bamboo structure on the outside.



The dimensions of the wall panel are as follows:

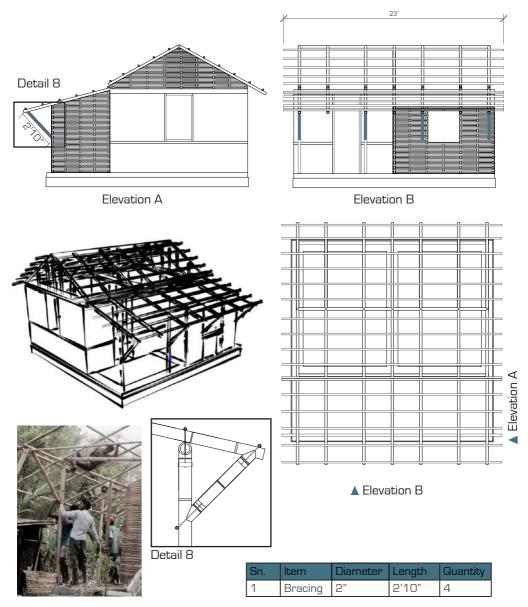


WALL 3

Refer to page 52 for the process of weaving walls.

Walls built aside on ground

 Proceed to attach the vertical bracing on the front facades. This bracing will strengthen the structure and allow longer eaves to protect the walls and bamboo from rain and sun.



11 | FINISHING

11.1 INTRODUCTION

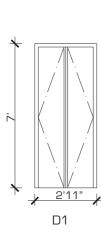
After the bamboo structure and woven walls of bamboo are erected proceed to work on the finishing elements which are roofing, cover, plaster, flooring and doors and windows.

These elements can be placed simultaneously by different workers saving time.



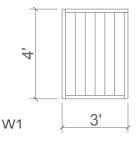
11.2 DOORS AND WINDOWS

Doors and windows can be done preferably with timber. If not available or too expensive, the alternative would be aluminium or metal.





Sn.	Description	Length	Height	Nos.
1	D1	2'11"	7'	2
2	D2	2'2"	7'	1
З	W1	3'	4'	4
4	W2	3'8"	4'	1





As the house is flexible, the amount of doors and windows and their placement can be decided by the owner of the house but always considering they have to be placed at the centre of the walls.

11 FINISHING

11.3 ROOFING

For the roofing use CGI sheets which will be attached to the bamboo through J-hooks. Ideally a bamboo mat or similar would be placed underneath to improve thermal comfort and increase sound insulation.





11 | FINISHING

11.4 MUD PLASTER

The walls of the kitchen and veranda along with the attic are made from woven bamboo mat and mud plaster.

11.4.1 Determining the mix

The Mix:

Each soil is different and therefore it is difficult to propose the perfect mix. It is recommended to gather local knowledge about the loam mix used in the area.

- To prevent cracks don't use too much clay.
- Too little clay will result in a powdery weak plaster.
- Run all the earth through a sieve to get the stones out.
- The mix should contain enough coarse sand.
- Manure is normally added to increase adhesion, strength and smoothness.

- To reduce shrinkage cracks while drying, the mortar should contain sufficient quantities of coarse sand as well as fibers or hair.

- To improve surface hardness, cow dung, lime, casein or other additives should be added to the top layer.







11 FINISHING

HOW TO APPLY THE MIX:

- To make the clay work properly, use a good quantity of water and spread the plaster with big movements with your hands.

- The plaster should be thrown with strong impact (slapped on) to achieve a higher binding force.

- If the plaster has to be more than 10 to 15 mm thick, it should be applied in two or even three layers in order to avoid shrinkage cracks.

11.5 MUD FLOORING

Level the surface and trim any extra mud.





12 SAFETY KIT

Safety First. Always wear the below listed tools to ensure safety while working.



Wear a mask in dusty areas & when painting; especially when working with cement



Helmets must be worn at all times to protect the heads



Wear hard soled, closed toe shoes or boots



Wear safety goggles when cutting or plastering



Wear gloves when working; especially when working with cement



Keep the site tidy to help prevent accidents

13 REFERENCES

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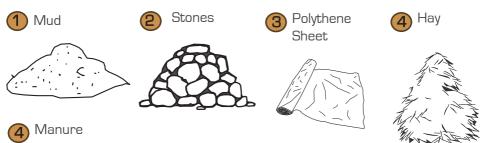
Shelter Cluster Nepal (2015). 10 Key Messages

14 | FLOORING

10.1 INTRODUCTION

The kitchen and veranda are composed by a bamboo structure. The kitchen is then covered with woven bamboo and mud.

10.2 MATERIALS

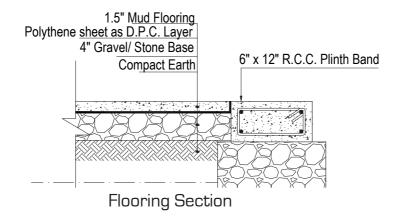


10.2 TOOLS NEEDED





10.3 CONSTRUCTION STEPS



- Fill the surface with stones and level it with wooden tamper by ramming.
- Check the evenness of the level with the help of level pipe. Mark the level on two or more sides and build the floor accordingly.
- Option 1 : Lay small stones in compact form as the base for flooring. (3)Option 2 : Use bricks as base if stone is not available locally.
- Sprinkle water to the surface and ram with wooden tamper. 4
- (6) Lay the polythene sheet which acts as a damp proof layer.
- Prepare the mud mix for flooring. The mix consists of 60% mud, 20% (5)manure, 20 % hay.
- 6 Apply the prepared mix on the floor.
 - Dry the floor surface for 3-4 days and apply 2 coats ofoil.

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