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social housing can still be the place
to promote small-scale sensitive
utopias of well-being and pride.

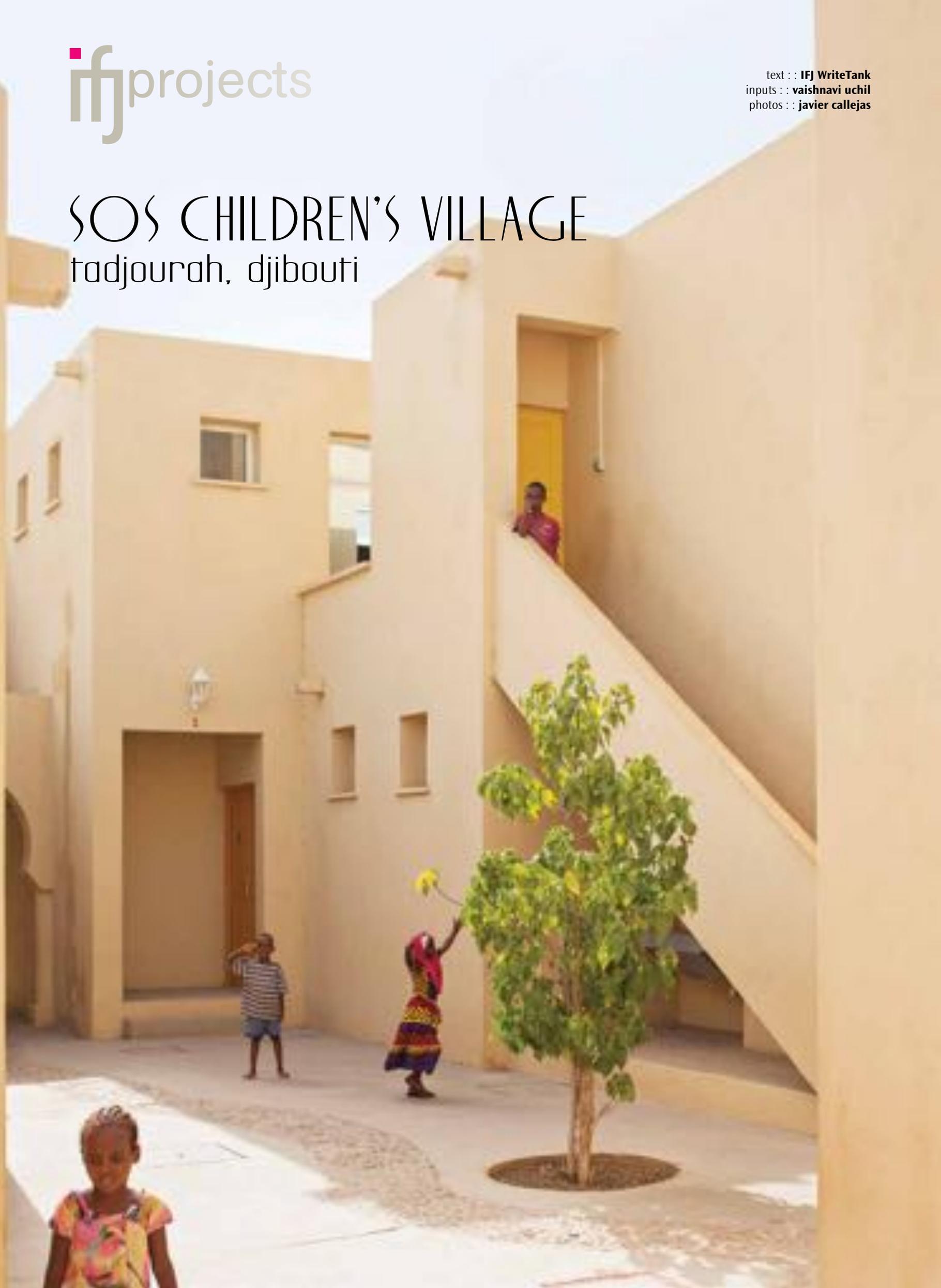
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HOZ Architects, Paris



THE IFJ SPECIAL ANNUAL EDITION ON SOCIAL HOUSING

SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGE

tadjourah, djibouti





Project: Social Housing Residence
Completion: 2015
Location: Tadjourah, Djibouti
Architects: Urko Sanchez Architects



happily ever after...

A medina for children designed according to extreme weather conditions and community traditions.

design brief and aims

The brief was to design a residential compound of 15 houses for SOS Kinderdorf, where they could run their family-strengthening programmes in Djibouti, located in the Horn of Africa, which suffers from persistent droughts and severe scarcities.



how this was accomplished

The architects studied their client's needs and learnt about SOS systems, about the community where the project would take place, their nomadic traditions and the extreme climate of the region. They then searched for traditional housing references in similar cultural and climatic environments and finally decided to design a 'Medina' with certain singularities:

- A. It is a medina for children** – A safe environment, with no cars, where the narrow streets and squares become places to play
- B. It is a medina with plenty of open spaces** – Public and private spaces are clearly defined; and in the private, the inside and outside areas melt, allowing residents to maintain a certain degree of outdoor living.
- C. It is a medina with lots of vegetation** – Where the inhabitants are encouraged to take care of their plants and benefit from the result.



how green was my project ?

In terms of distribution, all houses follow the same scheme but are arranged in different ways, placed close to each other giving shade one another and generating alleys between them in an apparently disordered way. Natural ventilation and sun shading was intensely studied, introducing natural ventilation towers where needed.

The construction of this project was possible thanks to an international team, which reflects the mixture of backgrounds in the practice of the profession, a Chinese contractor, Ugandan and Spanish architects, Austrian Project Manager, Kenyan engineer and Djiboutian workers. The materials were very simple: cement blocks, RC structure and Cemcrete finish from a South African company. ifj

