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# Low Income Housing Muscat, Oman

## Participant info

**Name:** Sanaz Kashi  
**Institute:** RWTH Aachen

## Project info

Poverty is a taboo word in Oman. The government tries to hide low-income communities by positioning them on the outskirts of Muscat and raising high walls around them. No one is allowed into these communities without permission.

As a result this strategy is not a long term solution, as the city's linear growth does encapsulate these areas sooner or later. The city's expansion strategies are fairly limited and social problems seem inevitable.

The site is situated in Al Athaiba, a big and diverse area within Muscat, stretching along the beach. Fishermen were the first to come to Athaiba. Their settlement survived the expansion waves of the city and nowadays coexists with high-income villas and shops forming a neighborhood with a special atmosphere. The fishermen community is an area with a strong identity. With these communities being important from an historic and cultural aspect, keeping these settlements intact should be another of the many measures the Sultanate has taken, in order to preserve its cultural heritage.

The Intention is to create a prototype - settlement for low-income housing that has no need to hide itself behind tall walls. A settlement appropriately designed for its users, coexisting in harmony with its neighbors in terms of usage and aesthetics.

The design is an introverted community, inspired by the traditional Arab city structures. The climate and sociocultural aspects are the two main parameters for the design. Wind and sun orientation, openings within the façades and shading techniques are just a few of the climatic techniques that blend with a hierarchical distribution of open space. Instead of tall walls, privacy is evoked through open space. The alignment of public and private areas was carefully planned in order to ensure the settlement does not seclude itself completely from the other structures.

