Foto: Elisa Engel

"Architecture is always political. As practitioners, we have a responsibility to understand the role we play in shaping communities – whether the outcomes are intentional or unintentional. Only then can we effect positive change. I believe that Architecture has an important part to play in creating a more equitable, sustainable and beautiful world.

We set up Citizen Architects as a vehicle for the change we want to see in the world. My teaching, especially at BASEhabitat, is an important part of that quest. Given the global challenges we face, it is also an invaluable opportunity to form connections with the next generation of likeminded Architects from around the world."

Elisa Engel

Elisa is a co-founder of London based practice Citizen Architects and a Trustee at Architecture for Humanity London. She grew up in Germany and Swaziland, and has lived in South Africa, Botswana and the UK. As well as being an Architect accredited by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), she holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Development Practices from Oxford Brookes University.

For many years Elisa designed schools and other community buildings with Walters and Cohen Architects in London. She has worked with Peter Rich Architects in Johannesburg, and designed and project managed a youth centre in Botswana for Architecture for Humanity.

In 2014, she set up Citizen Architects with Richard Hadley. The practice specialises in community interest projects and community engagement in London and Sub-Saharan Africa. Last year, they completed a shelter and training facility for homeless young mothers in Accra. Most recently, they have co-designed a public square with a community in West London.

Elisa teaches on the Designing Cities course at Westminster University in London and has been a guest lecturer at universities including Bath University, University of Botswana and the Martyr's University in Kigali. Elisa also lectures on ethics in architectural practice at the RIBA as part of their continued professional development program. In 2020, she was a member of the jury for Green City Kigali, a new neighbourhood to be designed and built in Rwanda.

Elisa has extensive experience in delivering community projects in complex environments. She specialises in identifying and engaging those impacted by developments and understanding the underlying power structures that architects operate within.

https://citizenarchitects.eu

>> back to BASEhabitat