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Emulating formal and spatial attributes of extant local building types in the construction of new habitats is a ubiquitous feature in resettlement housing programs. Merging with the local place and culture as well as providing a familiar environment for the displaced that facilitates the start of their new phase of life with some continuity of the life before the displacement are aspects of the rationale for this approach. While this may be of some worth, adaptation of formal features of vernacular buildings for resettlement housing is inherently a dead-end path bound to bring failure both in the design of the settlement as well as in the resettlement objectives. It also shows the limited understanding of the vernacular building process, the complexities of the resettlement process, and the intricately intertwined nature of the two processes. This presentation will argue that it is this understanding that is critical for the success in resettlement housing than mere emulation of vernacular architectural forms and languages. Furthermore it is this understanding that will facilitate the vernacular building traditions a future continuity. The presentation will (a) articulate the central themes in vernacular building process and resettlement process; (b) frame a housing provision strategy that is based on the connections between the above processes; and (c) illustrate this premise

based on several case studies of resettlement housing around the world.

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