

## “Bring change from the inside”

### Transforming informal settlements with the innovative TwistBlock building system.

#### WHO IS START SOMEWHERE?

Start Somewhere is a **social startup** focused on sustainably improving the lives of people in vulnerable conditions in the Global South. We aim to address the lack of jobs, unsafe and unsanitary housing, and insecure land tenure through the “change from inside” approach.

Start Somewhere is a **design and construction** team comprising of the German social enterprise and the Kenyan Ltd company. We **manufacture our own building materials** (the innovative TwistBlocks) at our factory in Kibera where local people are permanently employed.

Our network of global partners enable us to provide German quality building to communities that need it the most. Our clients range from individuals to international charity organizations and some of our projects are generated internally from donations collected for specific purposes.

As a non-profit organization, Start Somewhere also supports two schools in Kibera with donations that go to providing about 600 children with 2 meals a day and occasional supply of schoolbooks and other teaching equipment.



Start Somewhere team in front of the Kibera manufactory workshop.

Since the opening of the first TwistBlock factory in 2019 in Kibera, Nairobi, five **permanent jobs** were created for locals from Kibera producing 75 blocks per day. Construction projects create more jobs for local craftsmen and construction workers in informal settlements.

#### WHAT ARE TWISTBLOCKS?

- Interlocking – no mortar required
- Easy to disassemble and reuse
- Rapid construction
- Unskilled labour
- Fire and thermally efficient \*
- Modern aesthetic – no render required
- Lightweight & easy to handle
- Lower carbon footprint \*\*
- Less material per block \*\*
- Function as permanent formwork/shuttering

\* compared to building materials use typically in slums, like mabati sheet metal etc.  
 \*\* compared to conventional concrete blocks

For 10 years Start Somewhere has been continually developing a flexible, reusable, cost-effective and fireproof construction system for buildings in slums. The resulting hollow concrete blocks can be assembled and disassembled by hand as a modular, mortarless plug-in system.

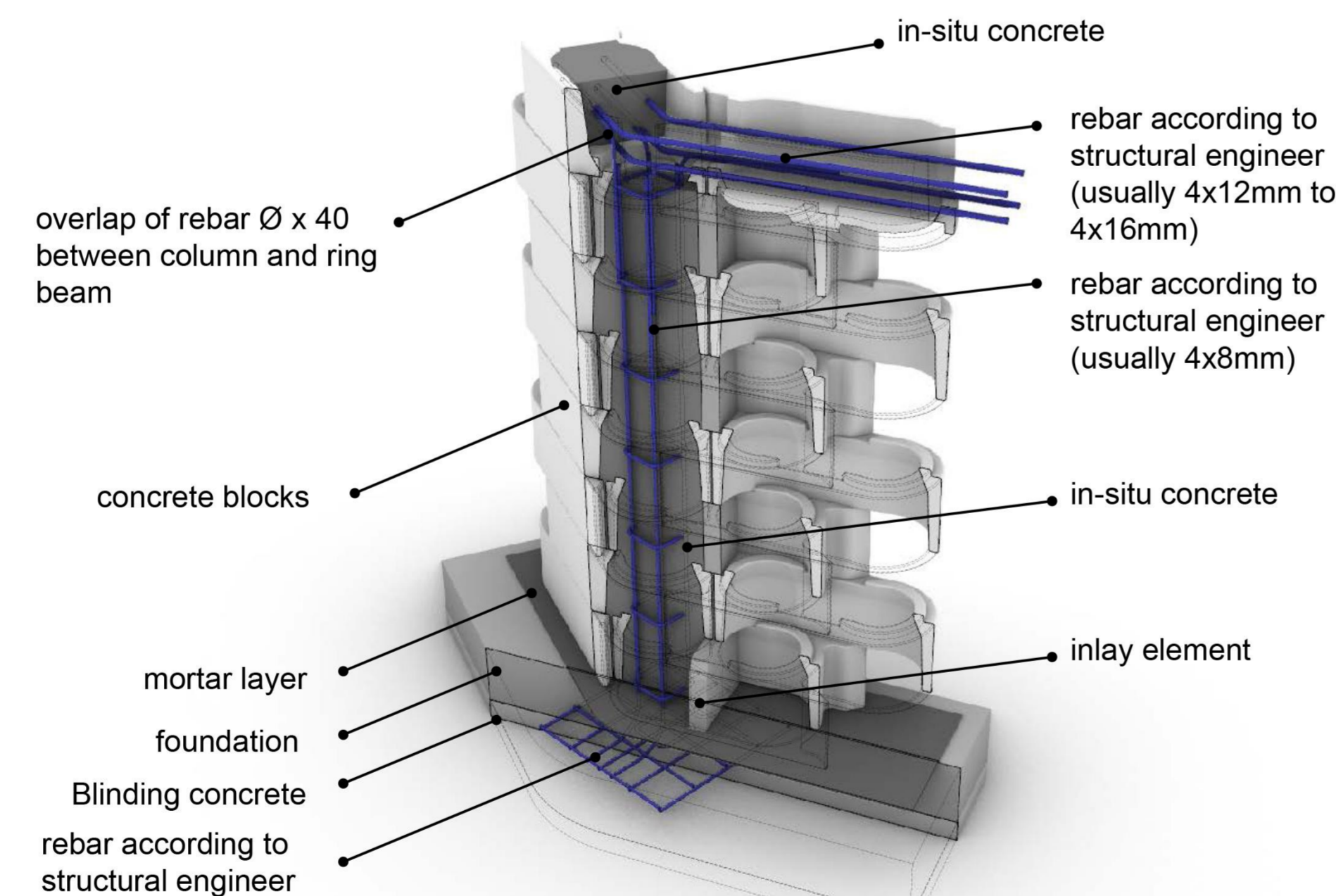


Diagram of the Start Somewhere construction system with reinforced steel columns and beams within a permanent TwistBlock formwork.

TwistBlocks are designed to **provide safe and durable housing** that can be adapted to any environment. They are **locally produced**, offer short construction times and economical use of materials.



The interlocking system of TwistBlock construction makes it fast and easy.



TwistBlocks are hollow and light weight and measure 175 x 250 x 500mm



The newly completed library and resource centre at Gifted Hands School in Kibera, Nairobi.

We can design and build your project at an affordable rate, to save money for where it is needed most.

## OUR SERVICES

Start Somewhere offers the following services:

- Architectural design services
- Construction management and implementation
- Direct sales of TwistBlocks for own-build projects
- Technical assistance for own-build projects
- Produce designs to assist with fundraising
- TwistBlock factory setup and franchising

Our clients range from individuals to international NGOs, GO's and companies.



## OUR PROJECTS

### COMPLETED TWISTBLOCK PROJECTS

- 11 x Dwelling units with shared toilets in Kibera
- 1 x School in Kibera
- 1 x Library / resource centre Kibera
- 1 x Landscape project for KDI School, Kibera
- Retaining and perimeter walls in Kibera
- A water tank enclosure in Kibera

### ON-GOING PROJECTS

- 560 sqm school in Kawangware, Nairobi
- Rural school campus in Ahero
- Mobile factory in South Africa





# Be part of our vision.

Partner with Start Somewhere to provide innovative housing solutions, empower our technology or generate sustainably business.

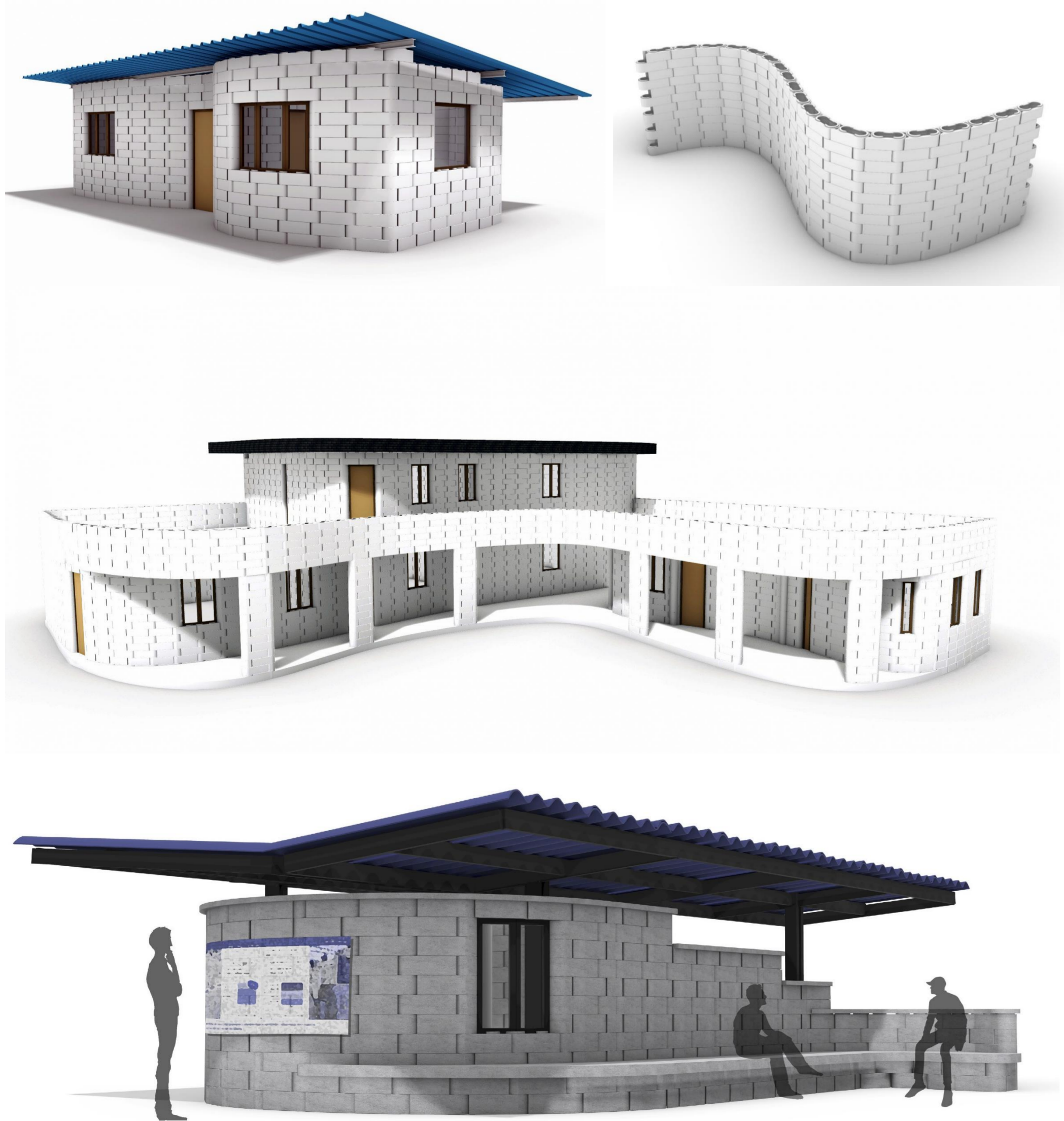
## BUILD WITH TWISTBLOCKS

Build your project with this innovative construction method and **support job creation** in the areas where it is needed most. Twistblocks can be used for any construction project, from landscaping to 3 storey buildings:

- Social housing / slum homes
- Individual houses
- Schools & community buildings
- Sanitary facilities
- Boundary walls, retaining walls, landscaping walls

TwistBlocks are also available for purchase as an “off the shelf” product so that you can built with them yourself.

They are approved for construction by KEBS, Kenya.



TwistBlocks are versatile and can be used to build any size project.

## MANUFACTURE AND SELL

### Start your own TwistBlock manufactory:

- Produce and sell your own TwistBlocks independently
- Create employment opportunities
- Become one of the first retail sellers
- Technical support and training from Start Somewhere

TwistBlocks are manufactured in the Start Somewhere **factory in Kibera**. A second, independent factory is about to begin production in Ahero. A **third factory** will begin in South Africa before the end of 2022.

We support independent organizations / individuals in setting up workshops by:

- Assisting with factory design and implementation
- Technical support for construction
- Training for TwistBlock manufacture
- On-going quality control assistance
- Specialist mix-design to suit the local raw materials



The workshop team gathers in our first TwistBlock manufactory in Kibera, Nairobi.

## FUTURE INNOVATIONS

### Sustainable materials

Start Somewhere is interested in partnering with the highly acclaimed organization Oxara to produce TwistBlocks using an innovative **cement-free material**.

The blocks have been tested using **hemp-crete** which uses sustainably grown hemp fibers in place of stone and sand, resulting in a **carbon negative TwistBlock**.

See [www.oxara.ch](http://www.oxara.ch) and [www.hanfstein.eu](http://www.hanfstein.eu)

### Roof structure

The future of the construction system will feature a **modular roof system** to easily integrate with the TwistBlocks.

### Internal wall module

A **narrower module** of the TwistBlock is under consideration as a **space saving** technique for small sites and tight designs.

### Mobile TwistBlock factory

A **container factory** is currently being designed for implementation in South Africa. The mobile factory can be easily packed up and moved to a new project site.

## OUR PARTNERS

### PERI

PERI are the market leaders in formwork and scaffolding and support Start Somewhere by providing the TwistBlock Moulds. Recently, production of the moulds has started in South Africa, making use of locally-sourced recycled plastic.



Together we have won the “German Innovation Award” in the category “Excellence in Business to Business / Building & Elements” for 2021.

### HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Habitat for Humanity’s Terwilliger Center for Innovation in Shelter is supporting Start Somewhere in setting up a second TwistBlock manufactory which will begin production in June 2022, in Ahero, Kenya .

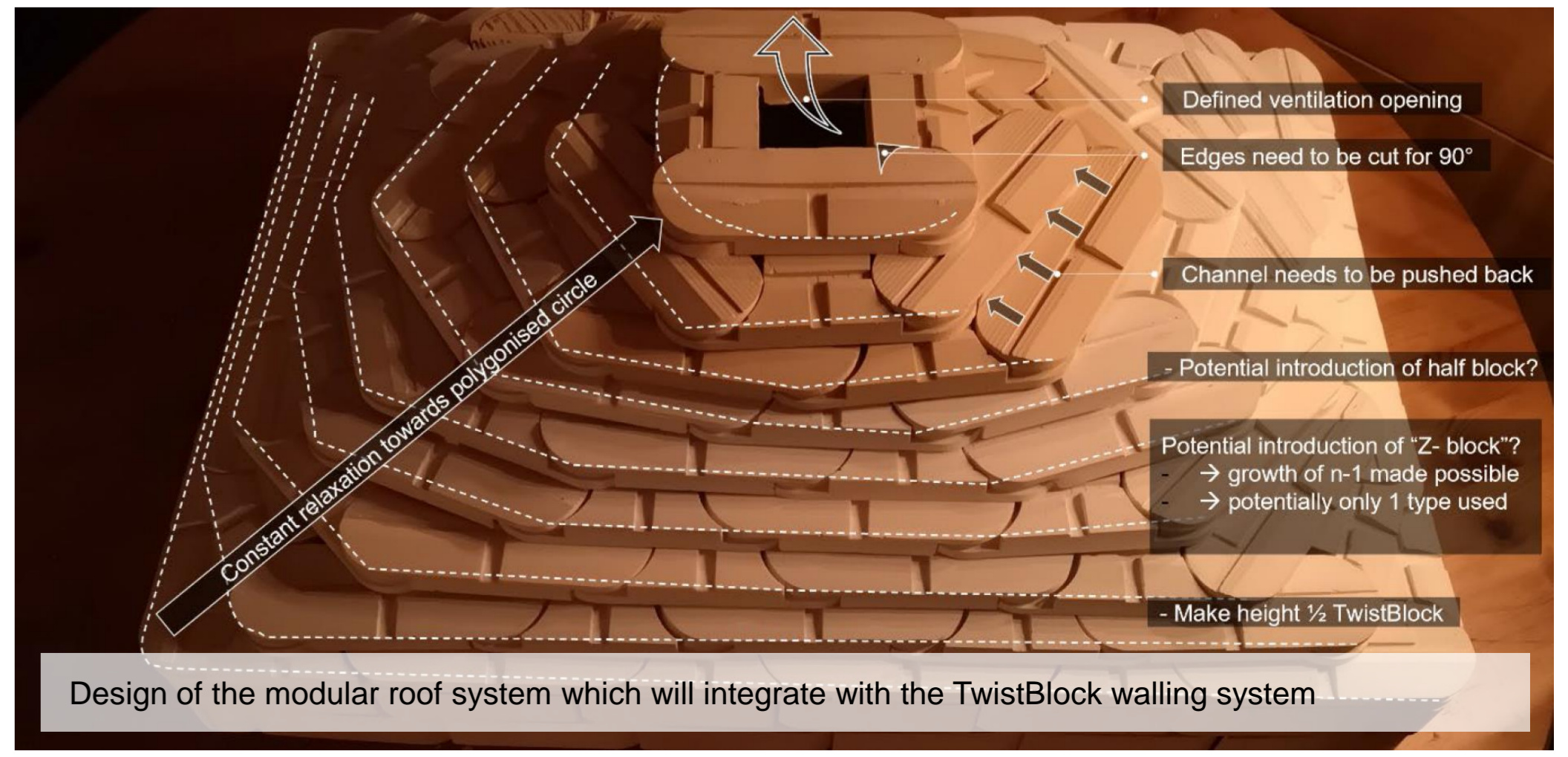


### KOUNKUEY DESIGN INITIATIVE

Many projects go through a community engagement process with the support of our local partners KDI, to ensure that projects are appropriate and well-suited to people they are designed for.



Above (left): TwistBlocks are made using special moulds produced by PERI, comprising of a recycled plastic form and two plywood closers. The newest version of moulds are now in production in South Africa and will produce much higher quality block than has previously been possible (above right).



Design of the modular roof system which will integrate with the TwistBlock walling system