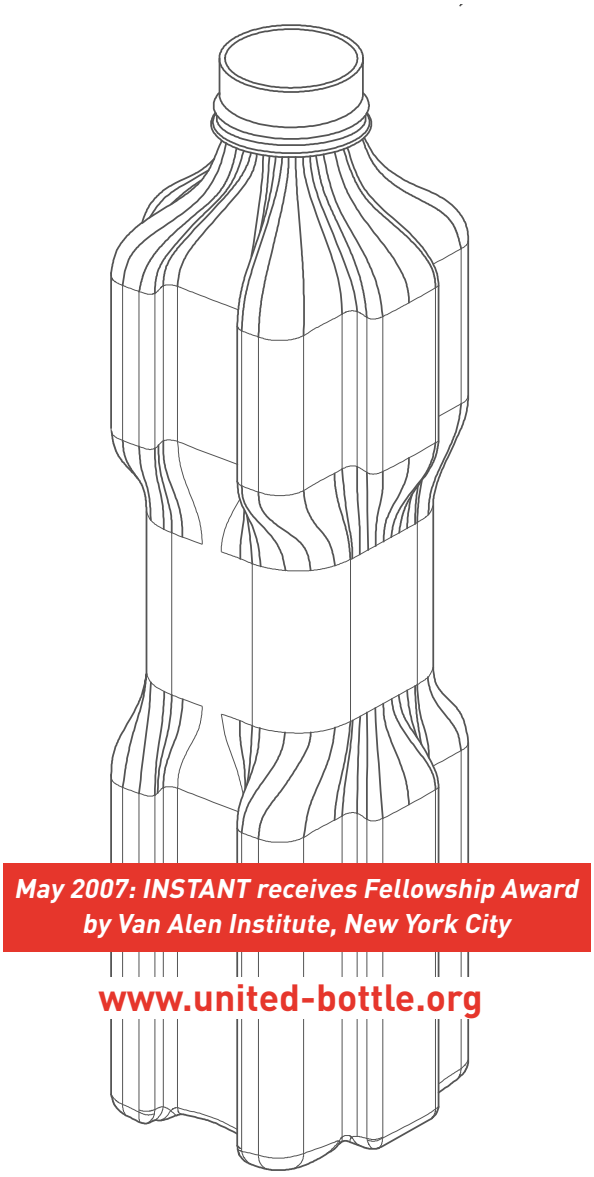


May 2007: INSTANT receives Fellowship Award by Van Alen Institute, New York City

www.united-bottle.org

UNITED_BOTTLE

Building from Bottles

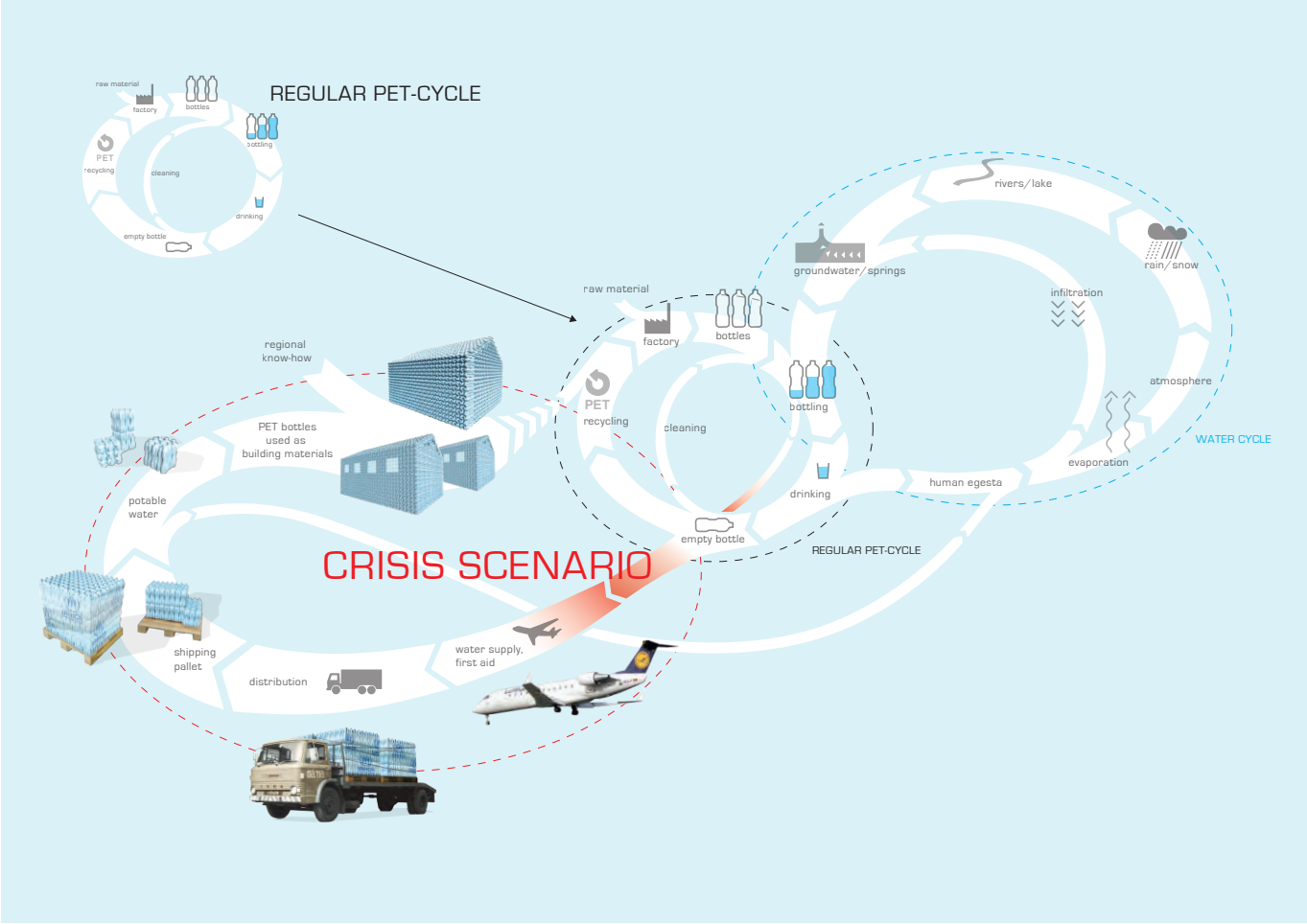
PRESSKIT

Premise

Fifty billion PET bottles are currently circulating in Europe alone. Since the obligatory bottle deposit was introduced, the return quota has exceeded 90 percent. PET bottles can be used as returnable bottles as well as recycled, and transformed into a variety of products – from all forms of PET vessels to textiles, such as linings and fleece fabrics. This process - called "Up-cycling" - mostly occurs in China, while the final products are sold again on the European market. This intersection of local and global circuits forms the basis of the project "United Bottle." Taken into consideration the increasing scarcity of resources, "United Bottle" suggests additional recycling circuits to those existing ones. The project's working hypothesis is that future design should think beyond the product, and design the waste the project will turn into - in order to open up possibilities for prospective use and abuse. The PET bottle offers an ideal model with which to study and implement this design agenda.

Circuits

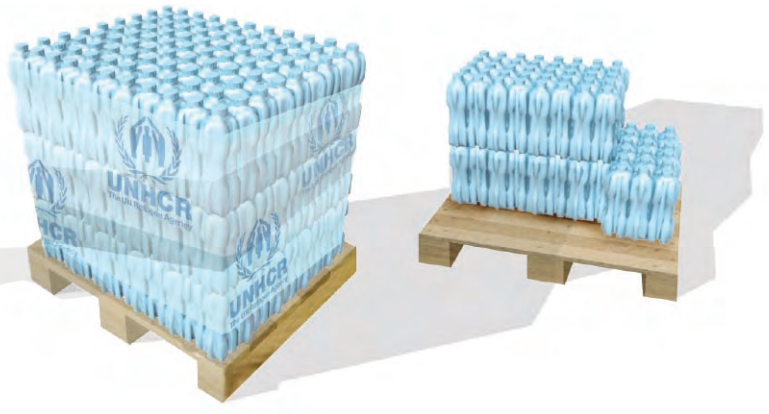
The "United Bottle" scenario is based on the idea that newly designed PET bottles can be taken out of the regular recycling circuits in case of crisis or specific demand, in order to be used as instant building materials for temporary housing.



Crises

Relief organizations and NGOs face two major challenges during a state of emergency: the distribution of drinking water and the construction of emergency shelter. In a state of emergency, the Human Rights Commission, or Nato transport tons of technical equipment by air. "United Bottle" proposes to short-circuit the cycles of consumer goods with those of crisis management to reduce both travel distance and weight. Ideally, the "United Bottle" would already be integrated in local water sales and thus be instantly available as products - or even better: waste - to the local population. An additional crucial advantage of the project is the chance to make use of the local population's technical knowledge to build shelters by misusing prefabricated consumer goods.

9 bottles are tacked into a pack



Bottles can be effieciently stacked on a palette

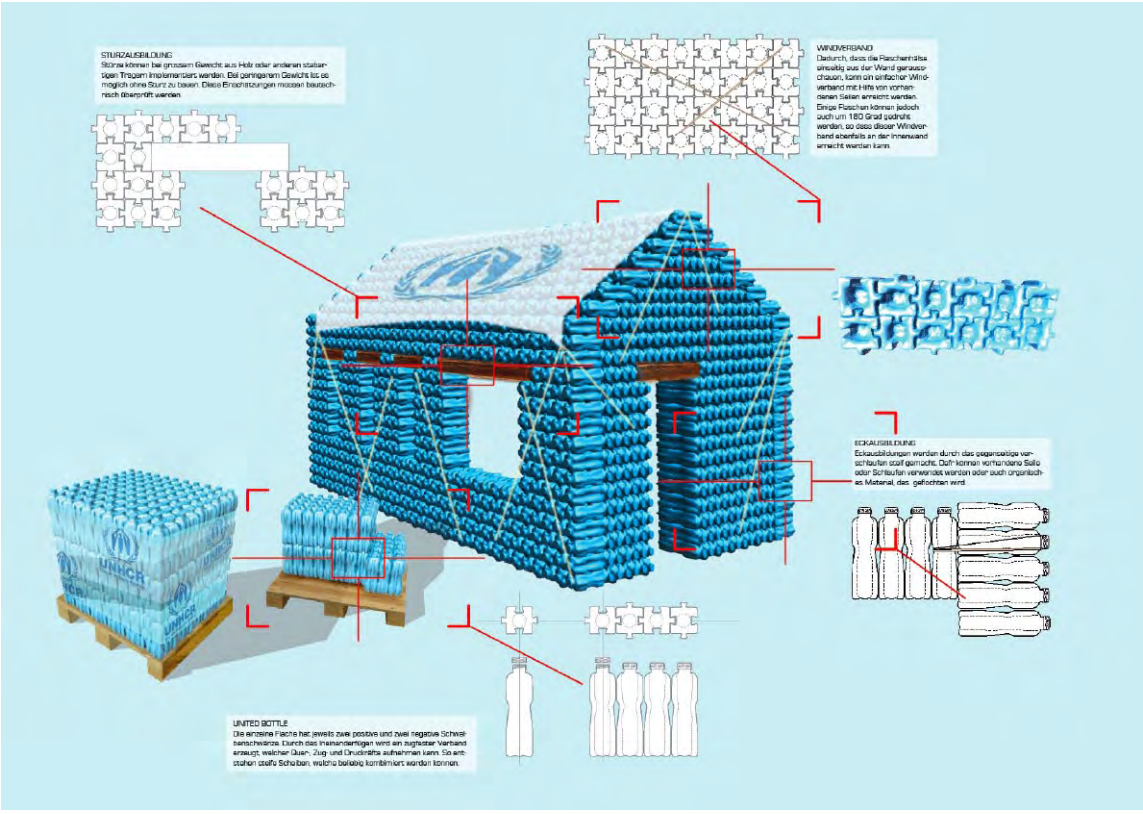
Filling Materials

In order to establish and run temporary settlements in crisis areas, it is crucial to construct emergency shelters as quickly as possible. Thus, the best strategy is one that can integrate locally available materials. Governments and NGOs can employ the "United Bottle" in the first place to distribute water locally and regionally, in order to use it after as a building material in combination with found materials such as sand, earth, liquid, and natural insulation materials such as animal hair or feathers. The simple water bottle would operate literally as a container for the awareness of the next crisis.

Water *Hair* *Feathers* *Earth*

United Shelter

"United Bottle" is a PET water bottle and a prefabricated building unit. Leading producers of mineral water as well as NGOs use it for their water sales or distribution. The bottle is integrated into the regular PET recycling circuits. It arrives in foiled six-packs on palettes at the local stores and is collected and recycled with the help of a bottle deposit system. In the case of crisis, the bottles are taken from those circuits and are distributed via the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) into the respective zones. In combination with a mechanical water pump, they are used for local water distribution. "United Bottle" allows for solar drinking water disinfection (SODIS). For local distribution, 9 bottles form a stabile unit that can be carried by a single person. The tuck-in system generates secure connections that resist torsion. This system also enhances its suitability as a building material. In combination with UN tent blankets, for example, "United Bottle" functions as a solid shelter construction and as a water reservoir. Filled with local materials, "United Bottle" turns into a construction material for temporary or even long-term shelter. Local knowledge of building techniques, improvisation, and misuse of consumer waste is employed to build small free-standing buildings and to extend and repair existing structures.



UNITED_BOTTLE on Display at "The Design Annual 2007" Frankfurt, from June 14-17, 2007

Digital Documents on CD

Photos and Text Files can be found on enclosed CD.

- Photos Frankfurt (15 files, 300dpi)
- Text Concept: ub_concept_july2007_en.rtf
- Text INSTANT: ub_instant_july2007_en.rft
- Concept Diagram (8 files)
- Patent (2 files)

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INSTANT - INSTITUTE FOR ARCHITECTURE, NATURE AND TECHNOLOGY

Founded in 2002, INSTANT works at the intersection of architecture, nature, technology and communication. INSTANT foregrounds the body as a biological and social construct in order to develp research projects and architectural practice on various scales. Recent projects include the international traveling exhibition "INVENTIONEERING_ARCHITECTURE", the private home "HAUS_BLICK" in Duesseldorf and the installation "ON_AIR" in Berlin.

Founders and principals are Dirk Hebel and Jörg Stollmann. Dirk Hebel studied at the ETH Zurich and Princeton University. Jörg Stollmann studied at the UdK Berlin and Princeton University. They have held teaching positions at the UdK Berlin, the TU Berlin, Princeton University, and American University of Sharjah, AUS and are currently teaching at the ETH Zurich.