

Alker – Mudbrick Harmonisation between Architecture and Nature
SAVE promotes Eco- Architecture by sharing knowledge and experience with
Cypriot Architects



“Alker, Production & Design” and “Alker versus Mudbrick” was the focus of a full day seminar/workshop session organized for Cypriot architects by the USAID –funded Supporting Activities that Value the Environment (SAVE) program. The training took place on the 31 July 2007 at Büyükkonuk village and combined lectures and discussions with hands-on demonstrations and practice in making and using mud bricks in modern construction and renovation.

SAVE joined forces with Sequence Planning and Design under the SAVE Small Grants Program to highlight the benefits to the environment and to the promotion of Cypriot cultural heritage by using mud brick construction techniques in both new buildings and for building restoration work. The workshop was carried out on the site of a SAVE mud brick historic building restoration project in Komi Kebir (Büyükkonuk). Sustainable development requires resources to be conserved and the environment to be protected. Earthen construction uses less energy during construction and has excellent thermal properties which significantly reduce the energy required to heat and cool the building. Because mud bricks are created from readily available local resources they are also cheaper than typical cement construction techniques. Alker is a material added to traditional mud brick materials which significantly reduce the time required to create mud bricks and thus complete mud brick construction.

This seminar/workshop provided a combination of short lectures on the following: production of Alker; design principles of Alker construction; and, discussion on Alker versus Mudbrick. These were followed with a hands-on tutorial on making Alker and Mudbrick. With the assistance of Prof. Dr. Bilge Işık and İsmail Cemal, participants were trained on how to make Alker and Mudbrick and were able to compare the two techniques in terms of labor and time requirement, durability and strength.

SAVE works to build local capacity to better protect and manage Cyprus’ valuable natural and cultural resources. SAVE combines work on environmental protection, especially water management, with cultural heritage conservation, preservation, and restoration. Like all U.S.-funded programs in Cyprus, SAVE is aimed at improving the conditions that will foster a durable Cyprus settlement.

Mudbrick making process demonstrated by İsmail Cemal



Trainees testing out mudbrick making

