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Field Notes on Scarcity

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- Scarcity of resources is increasingly becoming a global reality
- This is the first book to address cultures of re-use, re-appropriation, innovation and collaboration in architecture and urban design that arise from conditions of scarcity
- 65 leading design practices from the Global South share their perspectives on how to build a sustainable future in our precarious present
- Highlights the lessons to be learned from practitioners and communities in the Global South, where long-standing traditions prioritise an understanding of impermanence, inventive responsiveness to scarcity of resources
- The official publication of the 2023 Sharjah Architecture Triennial (11 November 2023 until 10 March 2024)

Scarcity of resources in all forms is commonly portrayed negatively. Yet these conditions—which have long been a reality in many extreme climate conditions across the global south and are increasingly becoming a global reality—often stimulate an abundance of innovation, inspiration, and ingenuity. Permanence has created a climate crisis, with spaces constructed with non-degradable materials, resource extraction without active replenishment, and buildings designed for a single-eternal use. Our present reality is marked by a global pandemic, violent conflicts, and the looming threat of climate change-induced environmental disasters. This fragile situation is particularly evident in the Global South, where systems, innovations, and structures shaped by imperial and industrial powers through exploitation and extraction of natural resources lack a long-term, sustainable vision. Yet there remains an optimism about the creative possibilities that arise within these constraints.

Field Notes on Scarcity, published in conjunction with the 2023 Sharjah Architecture Triennial, examines what scarcity truly looks like on the ground, and the challenges and opportunities it presents across architecture and design. 60 scholars and practitioners from across the Global South—including Lesley Lokko, Yinka Shonibare, Formafantasma, Rahul Mehrotra, Olalekan Jeyifous, Abeer Seikaly, Ilze and Heinrich Wolff, Chitra Vishwanath, Deema Assaf, and many others—contribute reflections, poems, visual essays, and dialogues exploring what scarcity represents, what it inspires, and what it reveals.

Tosin Oshinowo is an architect, creative entrepreneur, public speaker, and author based in Lagos, where she runs her own design consultancy firm CmDesign Atelier. She is the curator of the 2023 Sharjah Architecture Triennial. **Julie Cirelli** is a Stockholm-based American journalist and editor specialising in architecture and design.

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