CONVENTIONAL PRISONS

- Typical site with flat land
- Water flow is channelled
- Overcrowded dormitories or isolating cells
- Flow of information and direct interaction at the Agricultural Experiment Station builds trust and empathy
- Concrete, steel grills, hard paving

PROPOSED DESIGN

- ENCLOSURE
  - The enclosing wall as barrier: negative meaning

- MONITORING
  - Invisible laser walls erase the brutal boundary wall

- LIVING UNITS
  - Scales broken into clusters
  - Rooms too small to house each inmate

RELATIONSHIP WITH LAND

- Sight lines are limited by boundary walls

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INMATES & SOCIETY

- Flow of information and direct interaction at the Agricultural Experiment Station builds trust and empathy

MATERIAL PALETTE

- Concrete, steel grills, hard paving
- Stone derived from the site, locally available wood, sand

View towards the West from community clusters having streets, courtyard and terrace gardens, in the cliff. The clusters overlook a meditation hall and plantations in the valley where work is carried out. The desert's vastness is visible as a blank slate signalling infinite possibilities in life after release.

INMATES' JOURNEY: Zones relate to the inmate's progression through activities.

ZONE 1: Contact with family and friends

ZONE 2: Volunteers offer individual-centric sessions (therapy, education, reading, skill-based workshops)

ZONE 3: Scientists from the Agricultural Experiment Station collaborate for plant and organic food cultivation

ZONE 4: In the last stage, inmates interact with society at the Visitors' Centre, by conducting workshops on organic cultivation

OASIS COMMUNE

Owing to its isolated location, we perceive the prison as a place that utilises its disconnection from consumeristic society, and the ample time available while serving sentences, as an opportunity for the creation of a self-supporting lateral society.

SELF-SUPPORTING COMMUNITY

In dehumanising settings of conventional prisons, isolation is psychologically detrimental for inmates. It prevents them from re-integrating into society upon release from prison, resulting in an increased tendency towards recidivism. Our proposed design considers normalised community formations essential in establishing a healthy social environment within the controlled setting of the prison. By mimicking a community settlement in this way, cues are derived for being a self-supporting system. As a village, immediate natural connections from consumeristic society, and the understanding of ecology, eco-friendly development and energy efficiency – for whom there is a growing need in the emerging economy of today. Over time, this enables the prison to become self-supporting, hence saving on tax dollars and enabling the government to direct funds towards eradicating the root of the crime problem - poverty and illiteracy levels in crime-prone neighbourhoods.

The prison serves as a model for a future where society may be comprised of similar decentralised entities that avail the community-forming possibilities of nature and the availability of nearby resources.

COMBATTING DESERTIFICATION THROUGH SCIENCE

1. The phenomenon of desertification covers about two-thirds of the earth's surface (Urban Savory, 2013).
2. Climate change could cut crop yields by 25%, while the world needs to actually produce 50% more food to feed 9 billion people by 2050 (The World Bank, 2015).

Collaboration with an Agricultural Experiment Station on site thereby benefits the scientific community; inmates are trained as green-collar workers - people having an understanding of ecology, eco-friendly development and energy efficiency - for whom there is a growing need in the emerging economy of today.

The Pueblo Indians had historically settled near the Arizona region, in topographical contexts that were conducive for inhabitation. Community living was fostered through apartment-style dwellings that were designed for passive solar response. In response to this primordial relationship that the desert evokes between man and nature, our proposed prison is nestled in a natural canyon enclosure, tapping on run-off from a water channel fed by a large catchment.