

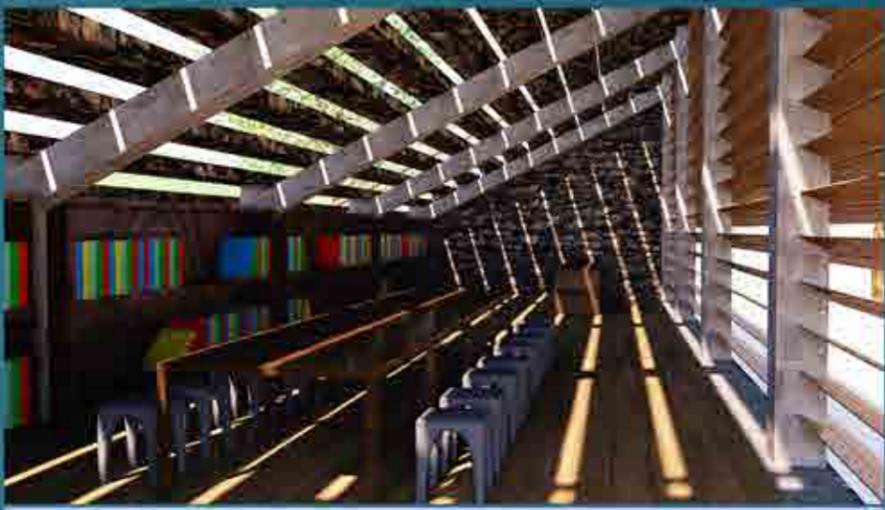
# STEPS OF THE BUYI

The Buyi people of Guizhou province in southern China are a people defined by the rich cultural heritage that they have been able to preserve for many generations. They are a people whose art, dance, song, and religion has shaped the unique livelihood of their community. Many traditional operas, festivals, and communal signing, are held throughout the year. Architecturally, their vernacular buildings are primarily built from local stones and wood; with skilled masons able to make whole houses out of just stone.

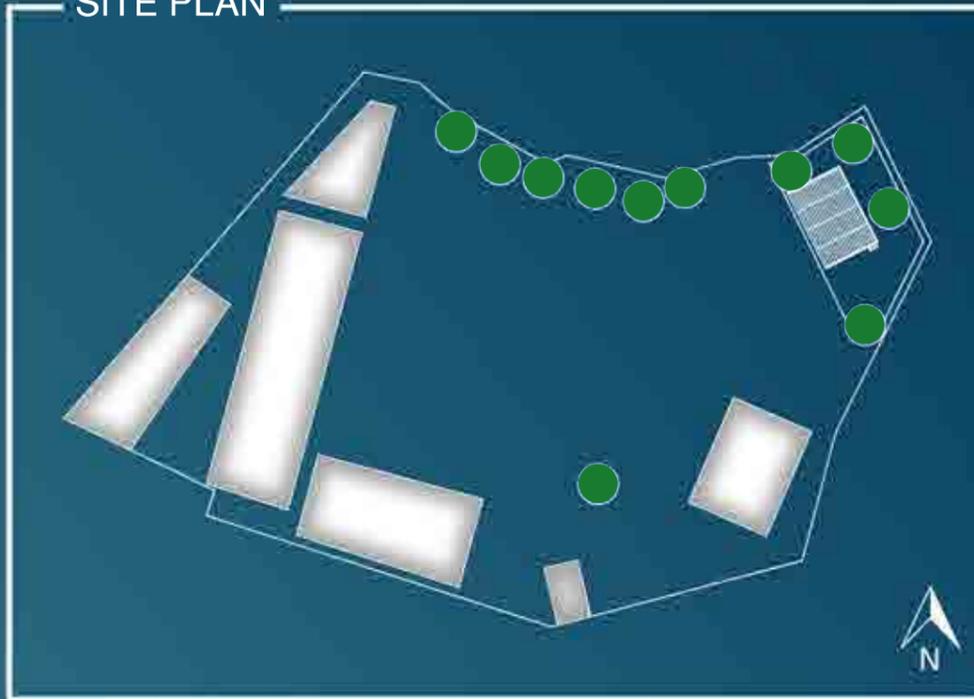


This scenario makes the school project very interesting and challenging. The current school of the Buyi is located in the middle of the village, where the school building looks alien to the rest of the village. Concrete and modern building methods are ever present in the complex, ignoring all traditional and vernacular architecture of the people. Seeing this situation, we wondered, how can design integrate the community with the school, and how can our design of the canteen and library show the locals that new buildings can be contextual to their village?

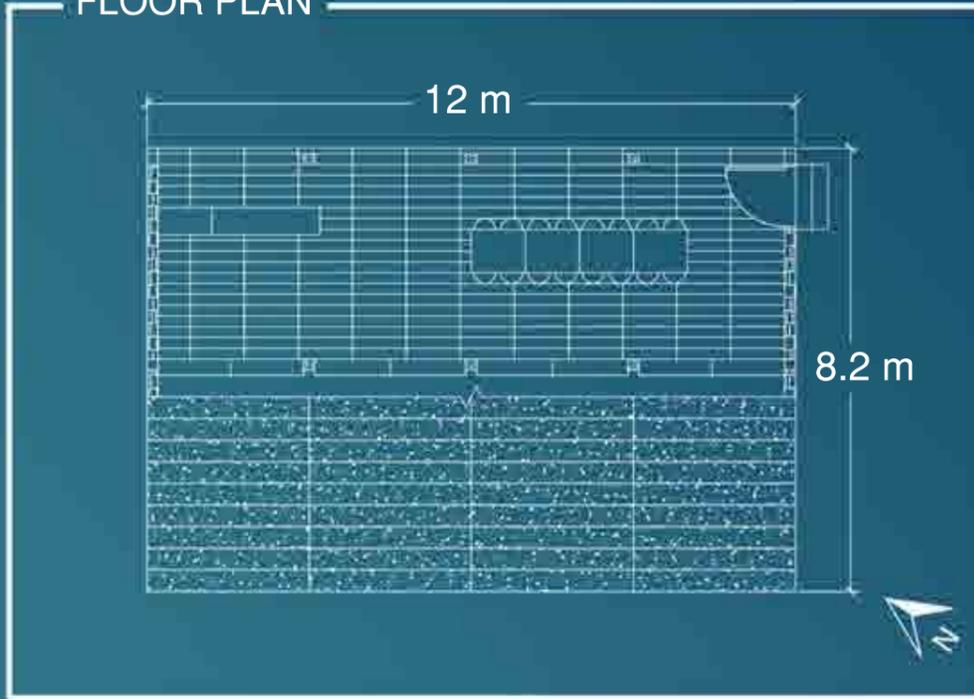
Upon asking these questions, we concluded that the most important thing for this project to do, is first be **accepted** by the community, and second to **educate** this community through design. We want to design a building that has a sense of belonging in this community. To do so, the design must be contextual in **Form, Materials, Construction Methods, and Scale**, and educate this community through its **Programs and their Arrangement**.



SITE PLAN



FLOOR PLAN



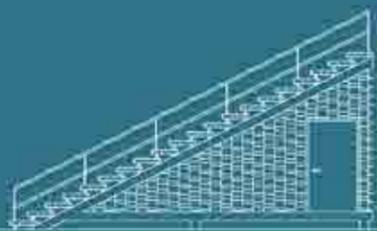
To integrate the community with the school, we needed to design a space that is equally useful for the community as it is for the students of the school. The building is therefore oriented to the school courtyard to allow the public to also use its facilities. By pushing the western side of the building to the ground, we create a physical connection to the courtyard and a visual connection to the valley behind. Taking inspiration from the rice paddies, we turn our roof into a flight of stairs that acts as an informal amphitheater for communal events, and an outdoor reading/eating space for the library and canteen. Like their traditional houses, rugged stone stairs and exterior walls will contrast with the warm wooden interior. Upon entering the building, one must walk through the library and canteen simultaneously, creating the mental association of the two functions.

Local materials are used to reduce cost and the buildings environmental footprint. Like the traditional houses, the building is slightly raise to allow air to flow underneath the building, reducing heat in the building during the summer. Many of the building's elements, like the stairs, floor, grating, and furniture are made modularly, to ease the construction and repair of the building. By using gratings and giving spaces between the steps, the building can have natural lighting and ventilation, adding the building's sustainability. Throughout the construction, local carpenters and masons must be hired to make this project for the people, by the people.

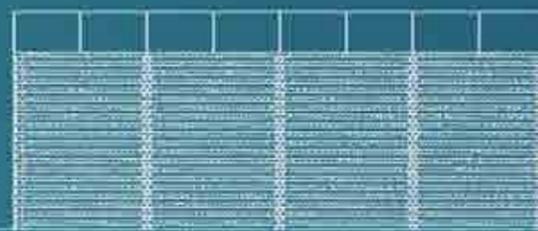
ELEVATIONS



NORTH



SOUTH



WEST



EAST