

KWIECO Shelter house

Oficina: Hollmen Reuter Sandman Architects


Lugar: Moshi, Tanzania, 2012

Fotografías: Helena Sandman y Juha Ilonen

Domestic violence is a problem women face globally. In a country such as Tanzania where legislated rights for women have not overcome deeply rooted social customs, safe spaces for women escaping violence are paramount. Working with the Tanzanian non-governmental organization KWIECO (Kilimanjaro Women Information Exchange and Consultancy Organization), the all-women practice Hollmén Reuter Sandman Architects has created such a space in the town of Moshi, which overlooks Mount Kilimanjaro.

The Helsinki-based practice was formed in 1996 when founders, Saija Hollmén, Jenni Reuter, and Helena Sandman visited Senegal and built their first project: a women's center in Rufisque, completed in 2001. They have continued to engage with social issues through their work, including their participation in the 2016 Venice Biennale, which provided space to explore the architecture's role in mitigating social crises. In 2007, Hollmén, Reuter, and Sandman created the non-profit organization Ukumbi to support communities in which there are not many architects. Through Ukumbi, they involve local volunteers and stakeholders in the design and construction of ecologically sustainable facilities needed by the community.

The architects designed KWIECO Shelter House in two phases; the first phase was completed in 2015. Surrounding a central courtyard, the projects housed nine bedrooms for residents, a matron's room, bathrooms, a laundry room, and a kitchen. The project is broken into separate volumes that are unified by an elegantly simple corrugated metal roof. The climate allows for most activities to be undertaken outdoors; however, the roof provides protection from sun and rain. The roofed spaces between the concrete-block volumes create exterior program space and allow for air to circulate freely around the building. When finished, the second phase will house offices for the NGO, counselling rooms, and a classroom, and there will be a further two courtyards. The first phase was built at the far corner of the site, which is surrounded by fencing and vegetation to ensure privacy. The second phase, which is larger in scale, is to be built with the same materials and techniques and will provide an extra layer of protection for the residents. Its separate roof will make it distinguishable from the first volume while the design will blend the two structures into one building.

For the women who are temporarily housed in the shelter, the building provides more than just safety. Through good design, it communicates a sense of peace to staff and residents alike and provides the women who live there with a sense of dignity. In the words of one resident, "The building is good and attractive, it has been built in a positive environment, and the way it has been built makes me happy." Whatever experiences may have forced the residents to seek shelter, the Shelter House provides a place of refuge and recovery as they prepare to rebuild their lives with the help of KWIECO. 

Patio del proyecto





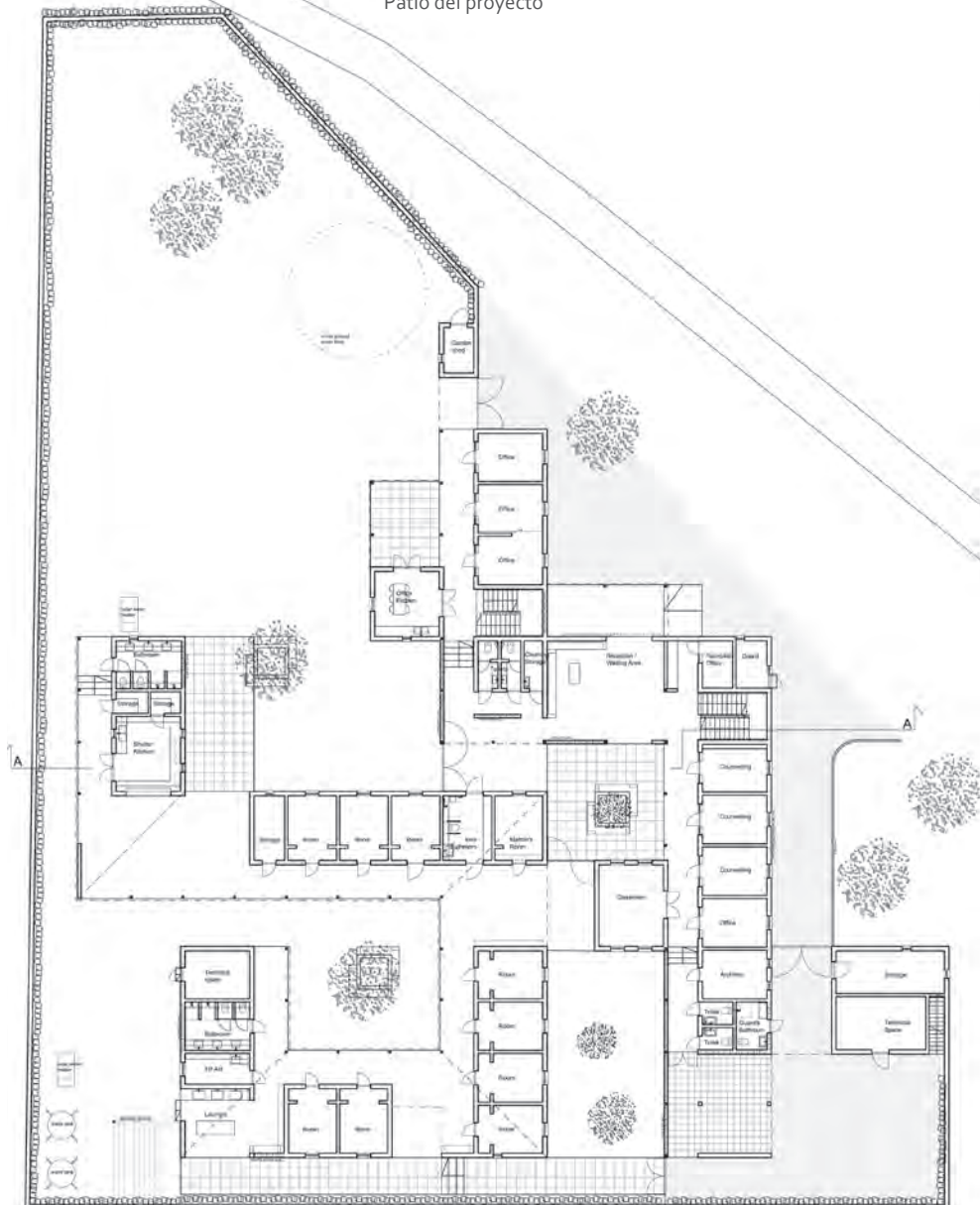
Fachadas del proyecto



Maqueta del proyecto



Patio del proyecto



Planta del proyecto





Circulación y patio interior



Circulación y conexión entre patios





Acceso secundario del proyecto