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Kwame Nkrumah Presidential Library

GENERAL DESCRIPTION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Kwame Nkrumah Presidential Library's project comes from Samia Nkrumah's dream to promote cultural improvement and sustainable development in her country, the Republic of Ghana. She is the daughter of Kwame Nkrumah, the African politician who drove Ghana to independence in 1957, and she is now the leader of the political movement founded by her father : the Convention people's party (CPP).

The library is conceived as a big "knowledge center" based on education, in all its forms. The project includes reading rooms and gathering spaces, conference halls, workshops and co-working activities. The library will also host rooms and laboratories to hold music classes as well as art and handicraft learning sessions.

By joining Ghana's education network, the library is going to represent the primary tool to train the next generation.

83% of Ghana population don't have internet access, and most of the students don't get to have books at school. To support social cohesion it is in fact paramount to involve the youngster in every cultural programs. The Young graduated students will have here the possibility to join internships or to be involved in child educational programs. The library will therefore represent an opportunity to train new professionals in fields like Culture and Education.

THE SITE

The Library will be built in Akosombo, on the riverside of Volta Lake, the biggest artificial lake and one of the main water stocks in the world (circa 8.502 km² wide, 148 km³ stored water)

Lake Volta Dike, which was promoted by Kwame Nkrumah himself, generates enough electricity for almost the whole country and it is a fundamental source of power for local industries. More than 2 million people live nearby the lake, which is also a primary source of drinking water and fish.

FUCNTIONAL COMPONENTS DESCRIPTION

The library will be a six-story building measuring 4600 square meters. The floors are developed around a big central empty space and they are structured according to a flexible scheme allowing free and diversified arrangement of the areas.

Each floor will be connected through stairs and boardwalks and the curtain wall system offers a continuous perception of the external landscape.

The main hall and the children areas will be situated at the ground floor and they will be connected to the first floor where the laboratories and workshop rooms are. The first floor will also host spaces for arts and architecture exhibitions and it will include a handicraft section, with a 3D laboratory.

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Upper floors will be occupied by reading and consultation rooms. There will be also a specific section devoted to Kwame Nkrumah, where his personal archive and his writings will be gathered.

The last floor will be a panoramic viewpoint with restaurants and spare time activities.

The basement will provide a 300 seats auditorium built for conferences and other events. A separate entrance will grant the auditorium's autonomy from the Library

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Kwame Nkrumah Presidential Library will be a bioclimatic building. It will provide high standard heat, acoustic and visual comfort all year long, thanks to the balance between few elements: shape, materials and technology.

The Library will be built with local and renewable materials, such as wood. Specifically, the refined woods salvaged in Volta lake.

The Photovoltaic panels placed on the roof will provide electricity. The building will be also equipped with a water recovery system for resource saving and a natural ventilation system. Solar protection will be granted by wide embossed attics and reflecting glasses to prevent heat accumulation. The green will represent an important source of cooling.

Credits

Place: Akosombo, Volta Lake, Ghana

Year: 2013 – ongoing

Surface: 4600m²

Project: Mario Cucinella Architects

Team: Mario Cucinella, Luca Sandri, Emanuele Dionigi, Monica Luppi, Michele Olivieri, Gabriele Motta, Giulia Pentella, Pietro Marziali;
modell makers: Yuri Costantini, Ambra Cicognani, Letizia Lanzi

Rendering: Cristian Chierici CC 79; Engram Studio