

AU dormitory

AU DORMITORY

A dormitory built for 50 students from sub-saharan Africa to prepare for entering universities abroad. It is right on the equator, but high above sea levels. In order to utilize the climate, walls stand in the East and West while big openings in the South and North to block the heat of the sun, allowing wind and light to come into rooms. Local bricks were recognized as cheap materials and taken for granted by the local people, however, brick's gradational red color directly represent their land and the size of a small loaf of bread which are so characteristic that they could be a main feature of a building. As architects we thought this was important. The bricks were carefully selected and were piled into walls, their visual weight and thickness lends the building a sense of security, like a trunk of a big tree rooted deeply into the Earth, and make people want to touch or lean on it. Through the long process of construction, masons and labors had found pride in their own bricks that they originally thought had no value.