



**THE LIBRARY PROJECT**  
KOSOVA



# THE LIBRARY PROJECT IN KOSOVA

The Library Project Kosova, founded in 2017, is a non-profit, volunteer organization with the aim of developing reading comprehension in children and young adults in Kosovo and motivating them to become lifelong readers.

The organization works with schools to implement reading as a weekly activity in the classroom, led by the teacher. During the reading hour, the teacher uses different reading strategies to help the pupils better understand and analyze the literature. The books read during this hour are carefully chosen based on a number of criteria. The aim is to read great books together in the classroom while discussing the text to improve reading comprehension.

In addition to providing the teachers with reading strategies and books to be read with their students, the organization has also revitalized unused spaces by transforming them into reading rooms, with children as the main focus of the design process.



*Children waiting for class to start*



# THE CLASSROOM PROJECT – AZEM BEJTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## THE SCHOOL

Constructed in 1974, Azem Bejta is an elementary school located in the small village of Grabanice that has educated generations of children from all ethnic backgrounds in Kosovo. It has faced many hardships and has received little investment since its establishment. The school lacks the essentials necessary for it to be considered a learner-friendly environment. The community is working together to improve the space, such as fixing the heating and electrical systems.

## THE CLASSROOM PROJECT

This is a project taken on by the children of Azem Bejta together with the Library Project Kosova, with the goal of transforming old, unused school spaces into a library and reading space for the children.

The library will be fully owned and maintained by the school and it will be open to all students, teachers and the community throughout the year. It will function as a place to read, focus, lecture and, at the same time, find peace and calm during breaks.

## THE SPACE

The school has located three spaces (one classroom, and two archive rooms) that will be merged and revitalized for the children.

The picture (to the right) shows the current state of the classroom, with worn-out concrete walls and floor, old moulded plastic carpet, timeworn unusable bookshelves and furniture.

What we see is a spacious room with a high ceiling and huge windows that lets the sunshine in all day long. We see an opportunity to give children the space they deserve to develop their imagination, and we see an opportunity to revitalize an abandoned and forgotten space!



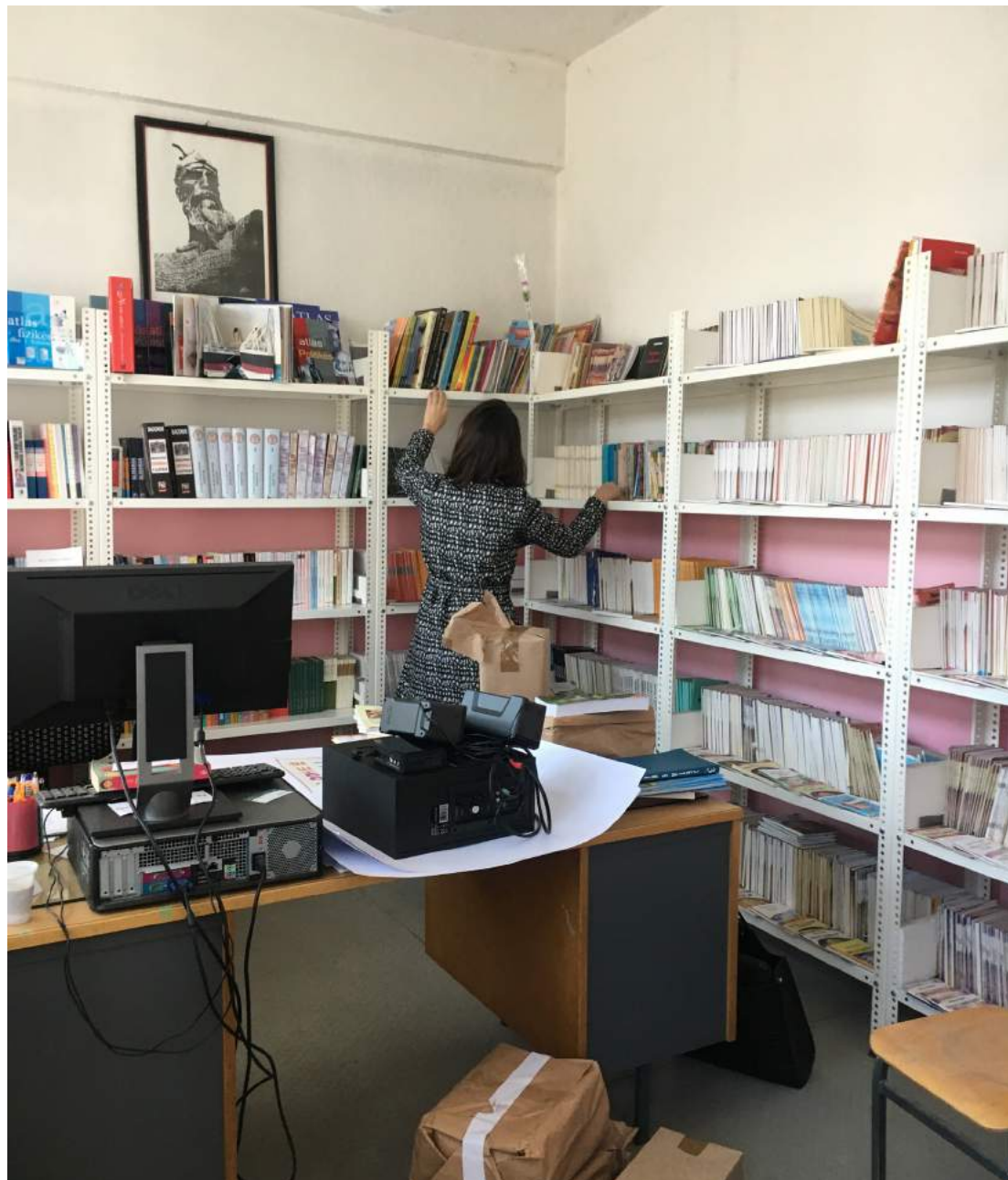
*The classroom*



# THE ARCHIVE

Let us introduce you to “The Archives” (seen in the pictures below).

These are the two rooms that will merged with the classroom. The thin non-load bearing wall dividing the three spaces will be torn down to create a larger space for the books and to create a reading room.



*The two archives*



# A SPACE DESIGNED BY THE CHILDREN- THE WORKSHOP

What better way to design a child-friendly, inclusive environment that is filled with books and school material than to give children a say in the process?

## THE WORKSHOP

An intense and inspiring two-day workshop was organized by our three volunteers, to give the children and teachers an opportunity to discuss and create their future library.

To ensure that children from all age groups had a say, two sessions were held: one for grades 1-5 and one for grades 6-9.

## THE PROCESS

We started by getting to know each other and playing games. We talked about the values and rights of children as guaranteed to them by the [UNCRC](#).

The children shared their learning process, what they would need from a space, their favourite places, and where and how they find the focus to study and how they find a moment of calm. Working in groups, they put their ideas on paper, pinned them on the wall, and organized their ideas as a whole. Then they set off to design the library based on their ideas.

The children were amazing and their imagination was inspiring! They chose the colours, plants, carpets, lamps and bookshelves they wanted. They designed an area for studies and an area for relaxation and music. They also requested simple things such as tables and seating, hangers to hang up their jacket and a place to put their shoes and backpacks.

Our ambition is to make their dream a reality.

[Kosovo - Savethechildren](#)



*Moments taken from the workshops with the students*



# WORKSHOPS, WORKSHOPS AND MORE WORKSHOPS

We wanted the children to be part of the *ENTIRE PROCESS!*

How did we do that? More workshops!

## **THE SECOND WORKSHOP: CHILDREN ARE READY FOR THEIR LIBRARY!**

To bring in more creative ideas to broaden their activities in school, more workshops have given the children space to express themselves. This workshop was held by two other volunteers with a group of pupils from grades 3-5.

Our younger designers did the following that day:

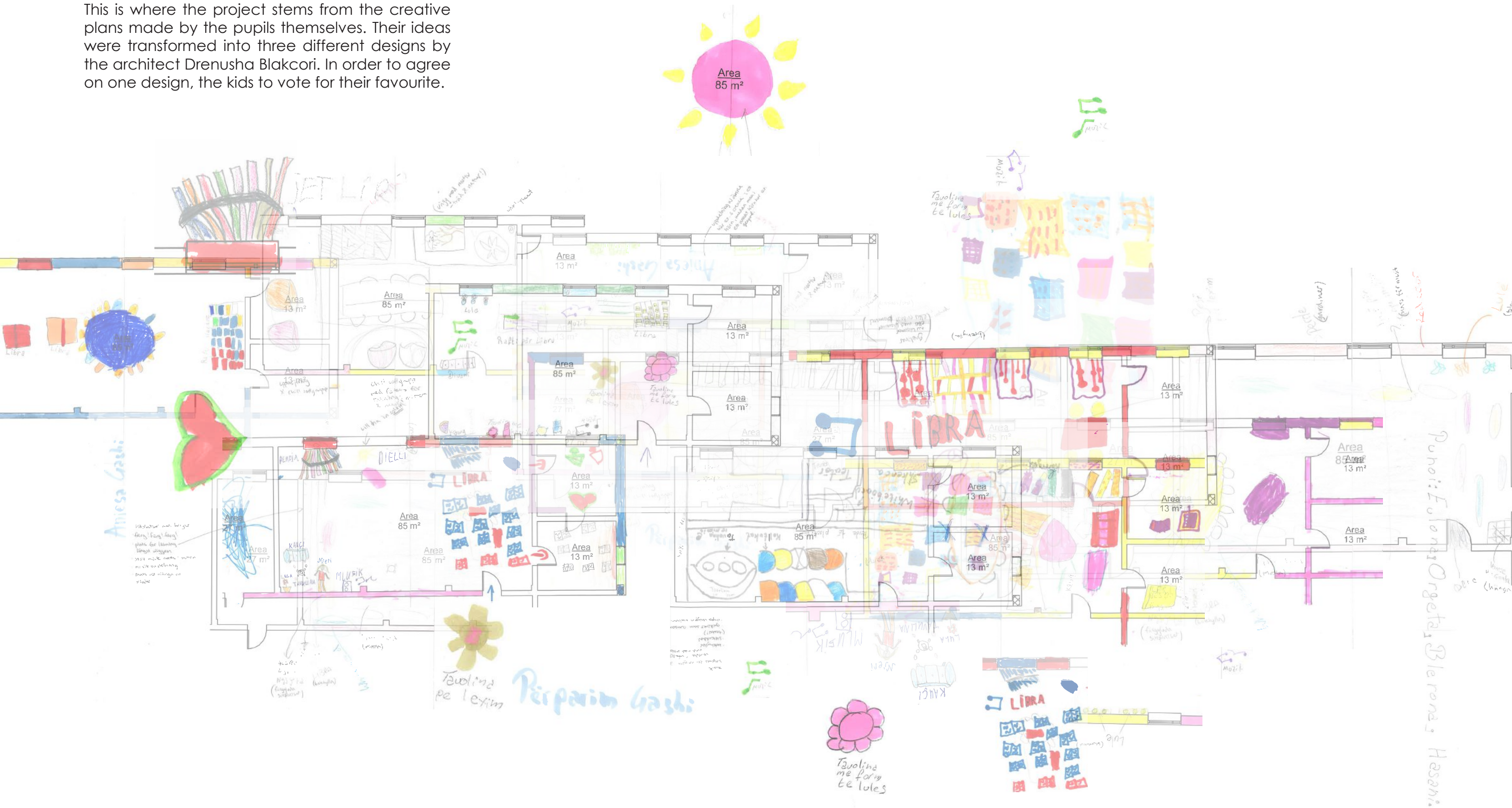
- They designed their own bookmarks
- They designed book covers for their favourite books
- They designed book covers for their imaginary books
- They have organized book clubs, which they opened with discussions on their favourite books
- They picked out educational games they want to play in their library
- They played with educational puzzles and had discussions about learning





# THE CREATIVE PLANS DESIGNED BY THE CHILDREN!

This is where the project stems from the creative plans made by the pupils themselves. Their ideas were transformed into three different designs by the architect Drenusha Blakcori. In order to agree on one design, the kids to vote for their favourite.



The creative plans made by the students!



# THE VOTING PROCESS

## THIRD WORKSHOP, PRACTICING DEMOCRATIC VALUES

In the first workshop, we talked about children's rights according to [UNCRC](#). Since we received many different ideas from the pupils, our architect created three different models for their new school library. During our visit in September 2019, we presented the pupils with all three options.

It was important for us to remind them that they all needed to help us make the right choice. Since we agreed that all children have the right to express their opinion, we asked the kids to practice their democratic right by voting for their favourite design.

Due to technology limitations, we used one laptop to go around the classroom to show them the three designs. Later, they walked up to the board and put their name under their choice.

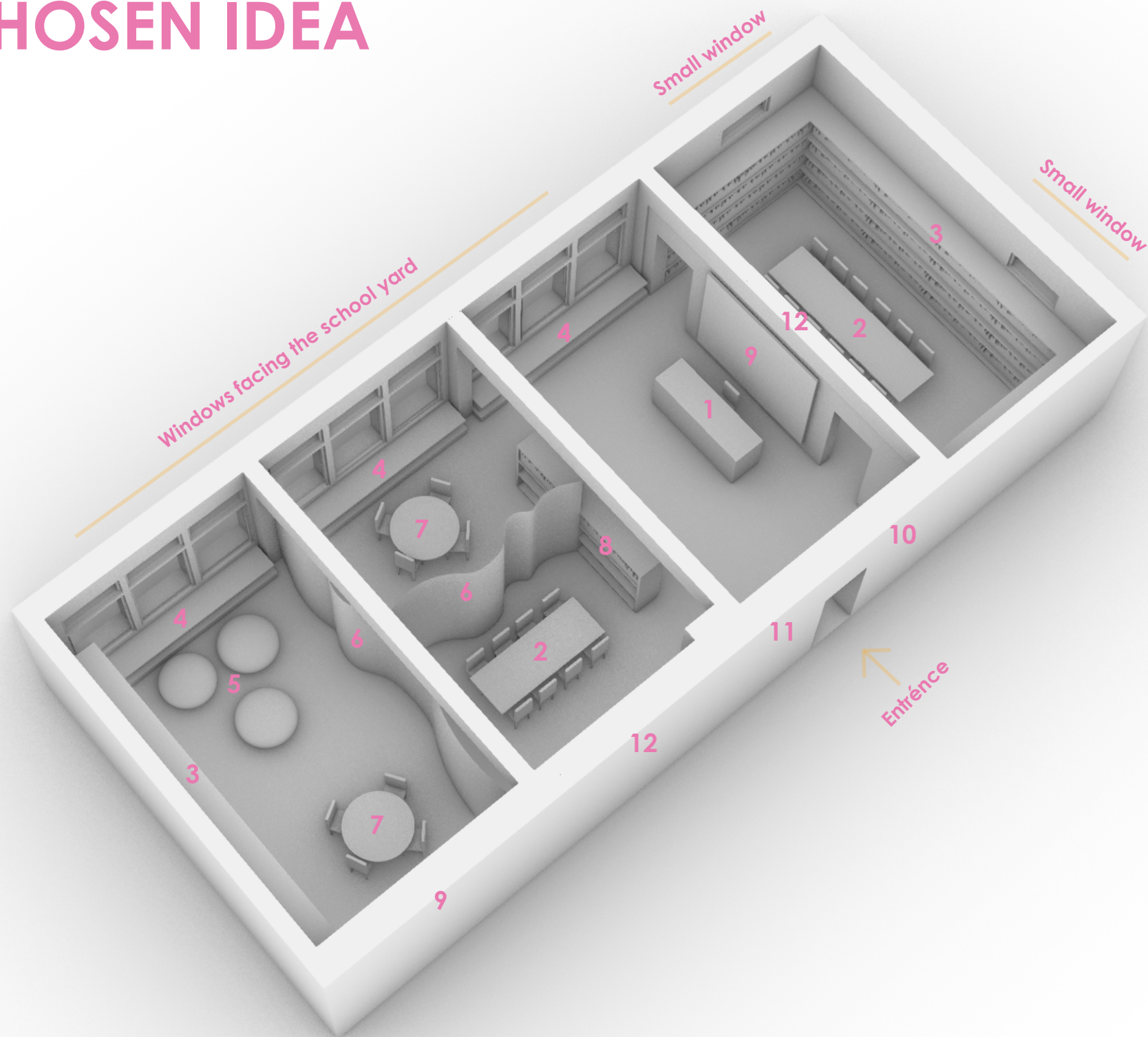
The design with the most votes won.

On the following page is the final blueprint.

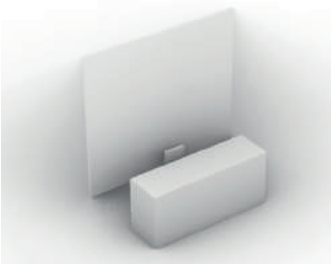




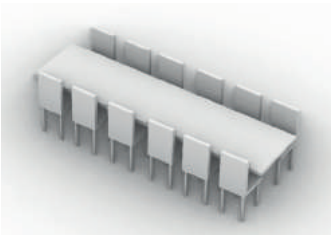
# THE CHOSEN IDEA



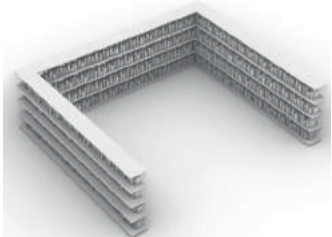
## Furniture



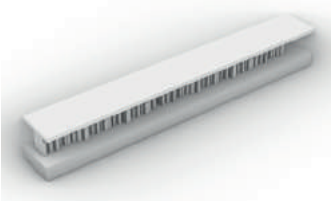
1.  
Reception desk with drawing done by our own painter, ArtbyQendressa, behind it



2.  
x 2  
Long desk for studying



3.  
Bookshelf consisting of 1 module that is placed into 3



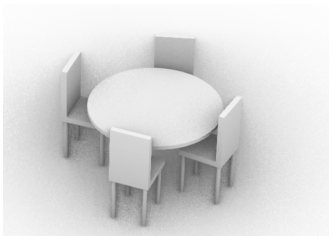
4.  
x 3  
Low bookshelf against the windows creating seatings



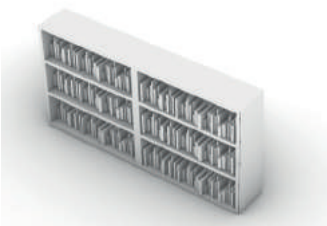
5.  
"Sitting pillows" layed out on the floor



6.  
Curtains to divide the room into smaller space

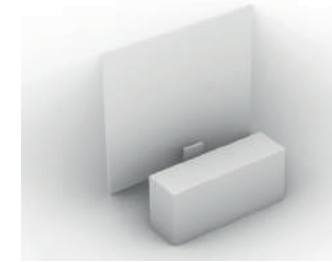
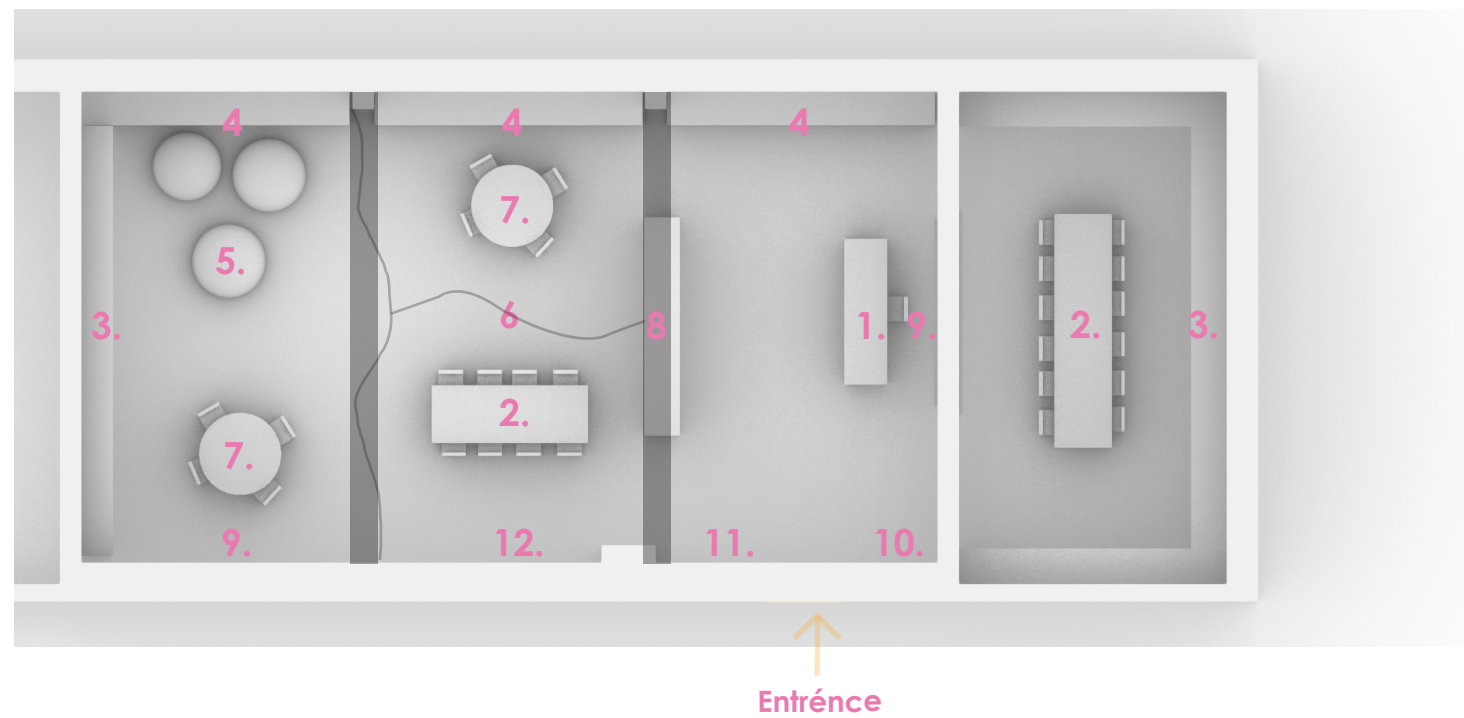
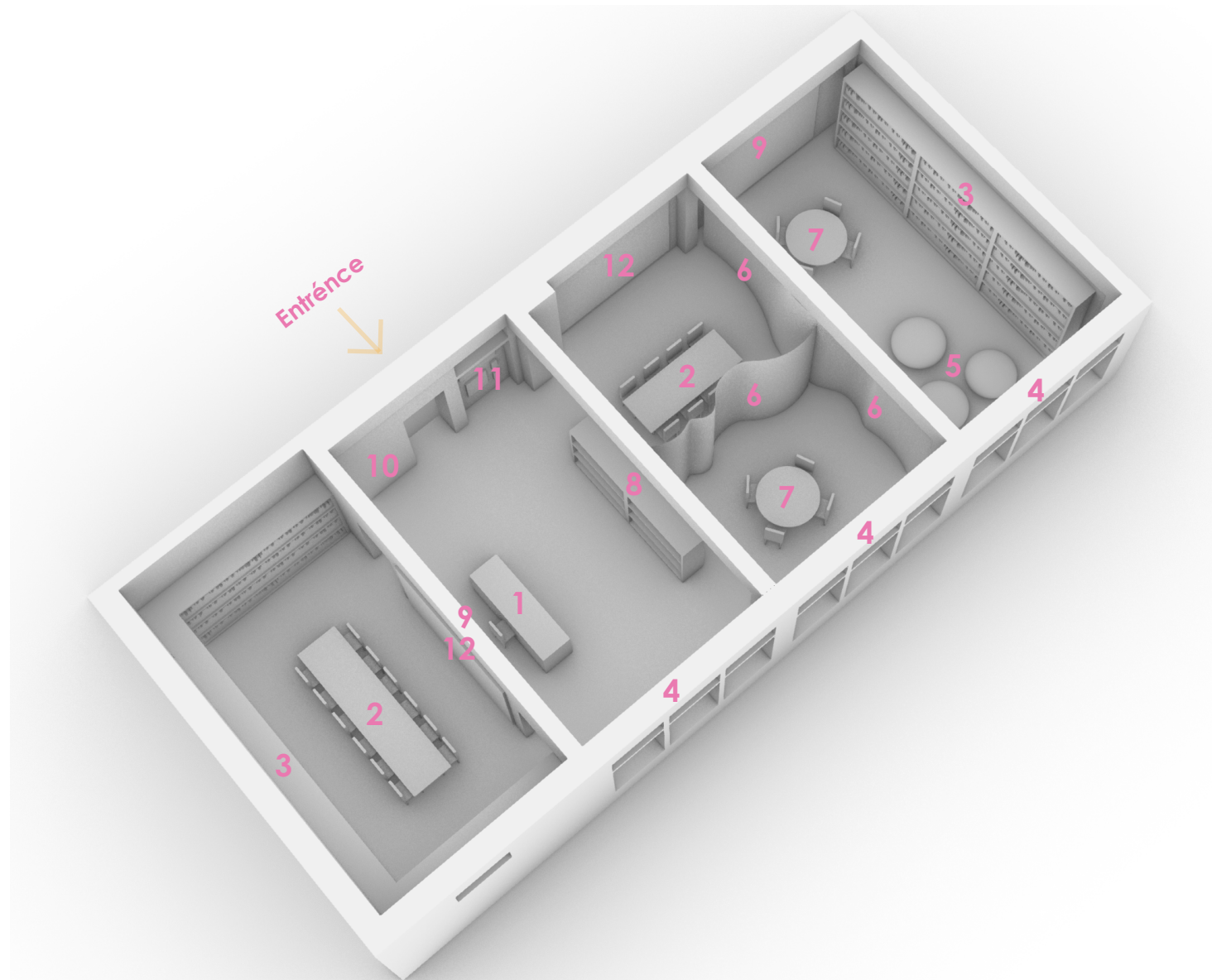


7.  
x 2  
Round study table



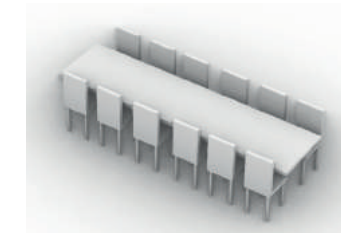
8.  
Bookshelf
9.  
x 2  
Paintings made by ArtbyQendressa
10.  
Shoe shelf and cloth hangers
11.  
Art exhibition by the students
12.  
x 2  
Whiteboards to draw & write on
- +.  
Paint, plants, carpets & lamps





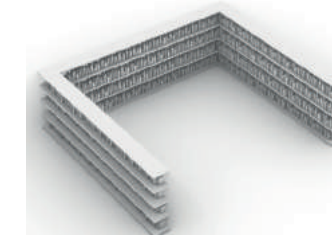
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Reception desk with drawing done by our own painter, ArtbyQendressa, behind it



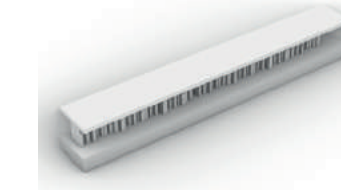
**2.**

x 2  
Long desk for studying



**3.**

Bookshelf consisting of 1 module that is placed into 3



**4.**

x 3  
Low bookshelf against the windows creating seatings



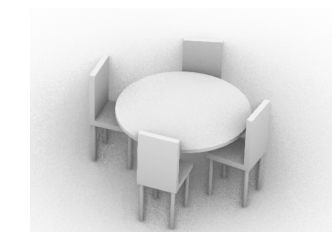
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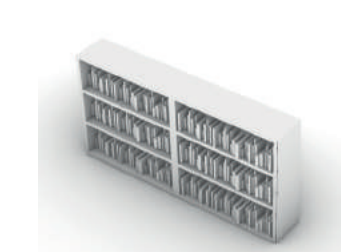
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**11.**

Art exhibition by the students

**12.**

x 2  
Whiteboards to draw & write on

**+**

Paint, plants, carpets & lamps



# FUNDRAISING

## COLLABORATION

*"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."*  
- African proverb

We relay and seek collaboration when it comes to reading and creating libraries. To bring these children's creative ideas to life, we need financial help. Therefore, we teamed up with BabesForBooks for the next step in rebuilding the "Azem Bejta" school library in Grabanica.

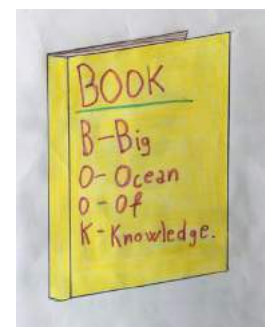
BabesForBooks is a fashion brand that promotes education and encourages the embrace of brains over beauty.

Again, we asked the students to help us. Over a few weeks, they each designed a T-Shirt for BabesForBooks. One has been selected and will be put on a T-shirt, where 10% of the proceeds will be used to fund the restoration of their library.

To purchase the [T-Shirt](#)

# BABESforBOOKS

[www.Babesforbooks.com](http://www.Babesforbooks.com)



Some of the drawings made by the students



# SCHOOL LIBRARY - READING AND PUPILS PARTICIPATION

## GUIDELINES

Throughout the process of creating the school library, we aim to work based on, inspired by and in accordance with the guidelines and laws stated in the following documents:

- [IFLA's school library guidelines](#)
- [KRUT](#) - Malmö City Library's new youth section where norm-critical and equal work contributes to an environment where everyone feels included and involved.
- [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- [School Law in Kosovo](#)
- [The Law of the Library of Kosovo](#)
- [Curriculum for Kosovo](#)
- [Sandin 2011 - Barnbibliotek och lässtimulas](#) - Children's library and reading stimulus
- [Att Utforma ett barnbibliotek tillsammans med barn](#) - To design a children's library with children



# WE THANK YOU

## AN ADVENTURE

If you have read about our journey this far, we would like to start by thanking you. We would also like to let you know that this has not always been easy for us or for the children. We have had to travel from different countries, the children have experienced many new situations, the teachers have had to change their old ways, but we have all learned a lot. We would also like to let you know that despite all the hardship, we are having a lot of fun. Also, we are facing many challenges in promoting reading and improving reading comprehension.

## One book cost only 5 to 8 euros

Your contributions will help us teach the children that their engagement can lead to positive change and that their creativity can be applied to solve real-life problems. It will show them that reading great books helps shape a person for the better, gives them new perspectives, and helps them gain new knowledge and process that into wisdom. We know books are better than magic because they are real and tangible, and they will help readers access places in their mental life unlike anything else. These children have learned to love reading with their classmates and teachers. They have learned the value of books and they need their dream library.



*The students that helped us create the ideas!*

## The amount needed is 10 000 euros

The money will go to renovate the room, buy books, furniture, and laptops and other technologies needed in a school library.

This amount will also be used to support the school library for the first two years until we hand it over completely to the school and the community.

This will be a model for the upcoming schools in Kosovo, where we, together with their students, teachers, municipalities and other institutions, plan to implement reading classes and school libraries.

## How you can help

Your support will be extremely valuable for the children. If you want to help us with this project, please donate by following options:

**SWISH**

1230876763

**BANKGIRO**

5238-7123

**PAYPAL**

[LINK](#)