

Transforming Abandoned Buildings into New Schools

A flagship Initiative by Balochistan Education Project

Highlights of the Story:

- Balochistan Education Project, along with district education teams identified 708 abandoned buildings after thorough survey & mobilization
- 200 buildings out of 708 meeting eligibility criteria, are selected for revitalization into new schools
- Vacant and abandoned buildings haunted everyone about the ills of development management & waste of tax payers' money
- Meagre government resources & increasing demand for schools pledged the need of revitalizing some of these abandoned assets into schools
- Not only resources worth billions of rupees have been saved through this initiative by BEP, more importantly its better utilization in the shape of centers for learning institutions i.e. Schools

Introduction:

The provincial governments in Balochistan had constructed a large number of buildings, including schools and others under the Public Sector Development Program or PSDP. Most of these buildings were constructed without rationalization or need assessment, therefore most of them were left unattended. Some of the buildings amounted to a cost worth millions of dollars in value and importance of location. With the passage of time and population changes, most of these buildings required operationalization to meet the increasing demand of schools from the community. With depleting resources of the government and development agencies, utilizing these buildings has become imperative. This initiative required a bold decision of going on a complicated path of officially obtaining these buildings for revitalization into schools as they were either occupied by other departments or used for other purposes by the community or left abandoned. Various operational and administrative issues relating to these buildings haunted everyone about the lack of management on part of policy makers and education managers especially the unwise expenditure of public taxes.

BEP | Turning Liabilities into Valuable Assets

Thinking out of the box, BEP embarked upon conducting a province-wide survey of unattended buildings so that costs could be saved for utilizing them on other aspects of improving education, teaching and learning. The need for a repurpose of the abandoned buildings was felt by everyone but no one dared to rehabilitate them for the purpose they were initially constructed for i.e. education & learning. Rehabilitating old buildings into new schools for improved access to education by converting them into new schools created additional jobs and added value into Project's intervention as it saved costs worth millions of dollars. An essential aspect of the whole process was that all these schools were identified and selected according to the pre-defined School Selection Criteria and in close coordination with the education department. This bold initiative is expected to contribute in policy reform by helping decision makers in education to replicate it and turn problem properties into assets that will serve as an invaluable investment for the future of our coming generations. The then Additional Director Schools, Mr. Munir Nodozai described the initiative as: "The establishment of 200 primary schools in abandoned buildings is a landmark achievement of the BEP management and the Education Department."

Some of the major in-kind contributions of this initiative are:

- a) Donation of abandoned District Court building in Loralai
- b) Functionalization of the defunct Zahra Public School Brewery Road Quetta
- c) Donation of 10,000 square feet private land in Bashirabad, Nawa Killi Quetta and 18,000 sqf of land in Gwadar for Girls Primary School Kulanchi Bazar, Gwadar

"Synergized efforts of BEP teams have led to the transformation of 200 abandoned buildings into new schools. Additionally, in-kind donations of land/buildings worth billions of rupees is a great achievement of the project in the resource-constrained province of Balochistan."

Mr. Asfand Yar Khan, Program Director BEP

Abandoned Buildings | Quetta, Loralai & Zhob

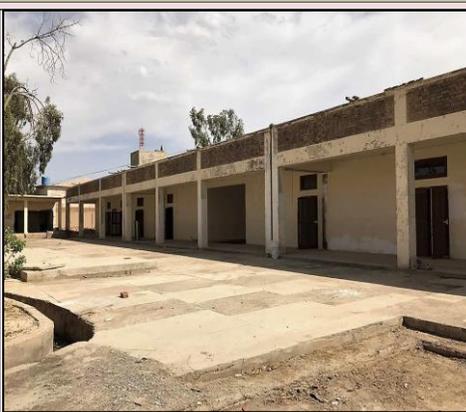
Some Noteworthy Examples

Zahra Girls Public School, Quetta	Session Court Building Loralai	Girls Model High School Apozai Zhob
<p>This abandoned building is located near the densely-inhabited area on main Brewery Road Quetta. This abandoned school covers an area of two acres of land with spacious building having ten rooms and a large surrounding area. This is an iconic building near Sardar Bahadur Khan Women University which is the province's only women university. Adopting this abandoned government buildings for establishment of a model high school on a critical location in Quetta is not less than a big achievement. The school will be upgraded to inter college in future and a management model is being built with women's University to facilitate quality higher education for girls.</p>	<p>Old Session Court building in Loralai is a spacious building of 15,000 square feet in the heart of Loralai. Having trust on BEP's commitment for education, Honorable High Court of Balochistan allotted this valuable building for establishment of a model high school. The building is adopted for establishment of Model Girls High School by merging the feeding schools into it. The gallows of the old court where criminals were kept for hearing will now serve as spaces for education and learning. This transformation is an achievement as obtaining land from other departments requires bold decision and strong coordination.</p>	<p>The government building located at Apozai Zhob is another abandoned building covering an area of around 05 acres of land with 14 classrooms but no boundary wall. The school was adopted after successful assessment by BEP Team. It will be renovated into a model high school and then inter college with additional classrooms and boundary wall. All these model High schools will excel and look different from other common schools by having Science lab, Learning Resource Center, Library, ICT facilities, Teaching Learning Material, play area, ECE classes, solar energy panels etc. This initiative is going to ensure a different trend in the education department by utilizing existing resources to save costs.</p>

Quetta

Loralai

Zhob



Rehabilitation & Construction Work Underway in Quetta, Loralai and Zhob Schools

