

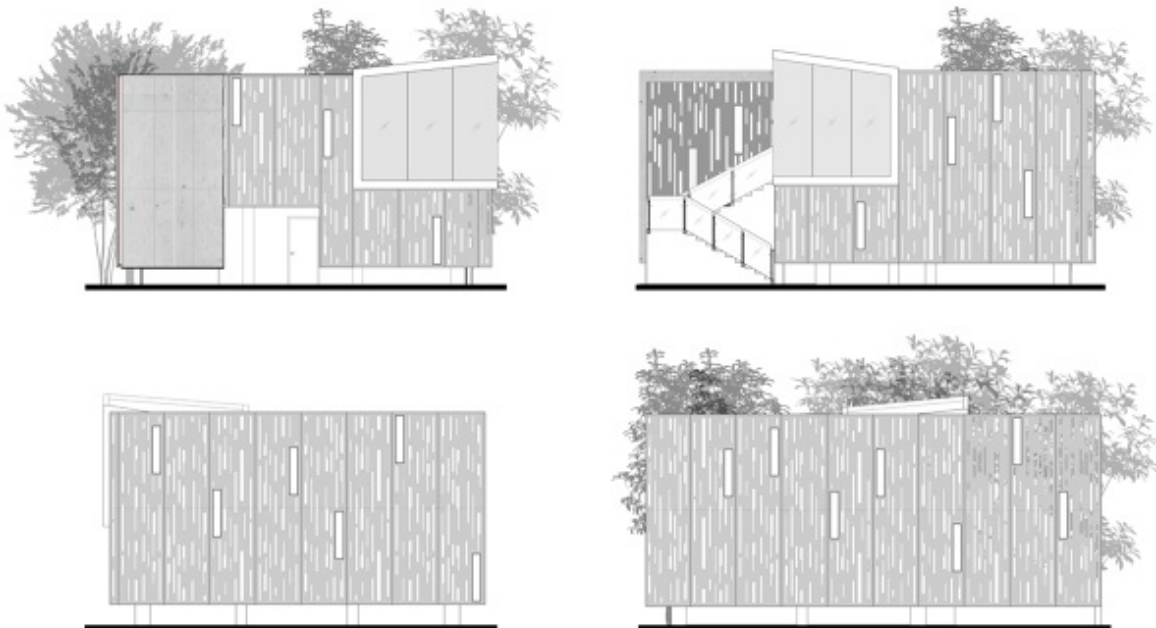
Dilapidated Concrete Shack Transformed Into A Beautiful Preschool Building

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It's usually much easier to knock down an abandoned building and construct something entirely new. What's rarer—but more environmentally friendly—is to rehab that decaying architecture into something that's useable again. The annex for the joint head start/preschool programs of Guarderia Ecologica La Mina in Corozal, Puerto Rico, is a beautiful case of adaptive reuse of a decaying structure. Over a design-build period of just six months, San Juan, Puerto Rico-based architects [Díaz Paunetto](#), transformed a derelict concrete building into a shiny new facility for meetings with parents, teacher trainings, and storage.

The concrete building, originally used as an education space for the Puerto Rican [Volunteer Corps](#), had been abandoned for 20 years. The building was in a state of disrepair—the wooden ceiling of the second floor had totally collapsed—but to preserve the ecology of the site (and to adhere to a short timeline and a tight budget), the architects elected to refurbish the existing building rather than demolish it and start from scratch.



The building's exterior was clad in [steel](#), perforated in a pattern inspired by the bamboo that grows on the site. Colored glass incorporated into the [steel exterior filters yellow](#), blue, red, and green light into the preschool space. On the second floor, a glass volume allows views of the children's play area below and opens the space up to plenty of

natural light. A concrete ceiling was added to the existing outdoor staircase to protect it from the elements.

The result is not just a safer, renovated version of a derelict education facility, but a beautiful addition to a school for young children.

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