

## PLASTIC BRICKS

*Kilos of plastic waste have been converted to more than 50 classrooms.*



### CÔTE D'IVOIRE

POPULATION:

**26**  
MILLION



NUMBER OF  
CHILDREN:

**13**  
MILLION

< 18 years old, or  
50% of the total  
population

**1,6**  
MILLION

children and  
youngsters are  
out of school

Côte d'Ivoire suffers from a huge waste problem. The capital produces 288.000 kilos of plastic daily. Only five percent of this is being recycled. Unfortunately, this yields far too little to sustain a good life. At the same time, 1,6 million children and youngsters are out of school in this West African country. UNICEF and partners are working on a project that will combat both issues, by recycling plastic and transforming this into building bricks for classrooms.

### GOALS SET IN 2020

Recycle **80** tons of plastic.

Train **150** women in waste recycling and entrepreneurship.

Build **133** classrooms made of recycled plastic bricks.

Give **6000** extra children access to education.

### GOALS ACHIEVED IN 2020

**295** tons of plastic was recycled.

**33** women were trained in waste recycling and entrepreneurship.

**56** classrooms were built from plastic bricks.

**2800** children are able to attend school.

## WHAT WE ACHIEVED

Opening a recycling plant (end 2019) was a milestone. Together with our partners, we are now able to recycle large amounts of plastic and turn it into building bricks for classrooms. In total, we have been able to recycle 295 tons of plastic. This resulted in the building of 56 classrooms, intended for 2800 children. All of the classrooms are equipped with furniture, such as desks and chairs. Children and teachers are content with this progress, and so are the young women who now have the possibility to collect and process kilos of plastic waste for a fair price. New trainings were developed especially for them. This way, they learn to recycle plastic waste and practice entrepreneurship. In the first half of 2020, 33 women have been able to attend these trainings. With the trainings and the recycling work, women can work more efficiently and together we can create a better living environment for children.

## THE CHALLENGES

Just like the Netherlands, Côte D'Ivoire suffers from the COVID-19 crisis. It has caused the delay of activities and the closing of schools. Fortunately, schools have reopened, partly thanks to UNICEF'S new guidelines that promote safety in schools. Another issue is gender-based work culture. It appears that many of the women looking for a job in the waste and recycling sector suffer from cultural barriers. Traditionally, the work is done by men. Therefore, access to landfills is often denied to women.

## PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

In the coming months, UNICEF will make additional efforts to reduce the effects of COVID-19 and ensure that education can continue. UNICEF is working together with the government on a sustainable plan of action that safeguards children and education staff. Meanwhile, we continue to support women and build classrooms. UNICEF aims to have at least 500 classrooms build by the end of 2022.



*Affiemie (12) is happy and proud, despite her disability. She attends one of the first plastic schools that was built with support from the Netherlands. "I love school," she says. Thanks to the new school, she can now keep up with the rest of her peers. The new school is not only cleaner and prettier, it also holds better facilities. Moreover, everyone is supportive. Affiemie's desk is now in the front row of the classroom so she can see the blackboard clearly. If the teacher writes something down, she does this in big letters so that Affiemie can follow as well.*

## More information

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