

IVORY COAST

Building bricks for the future

Context

Côte d'Ivoire has a population of approximately **24 million people**. Half of them are children and adolescents with limited prospects for their future: **nearly 2 million children are out of school**.

At the same time, the country suffocates in plastic waste. **Every day**, the city of **Abidjan produces 288 tons of plastic waste**. Only 5% is recycled, mostly informally by women. The rest ends up in landfills or pollutes low income districts.

Improper waste management is responsible for **60% of malaria, diarrhea, and pneumonia cases** in Ivorian children.

Our solution

In 2018, UNICEF partnered with Conceptos Plásticos, a Colombian social enterprise specialized in plastic recycling that has developed an innovative project: **plastic waste is transformed into LEGO-like bricks, used to build classrooms**.

This pilot phase in Côte d'Ivoire was a great success with 27 classrooms built, **1,350 children in school** and 150 tons of plastic recycled. In 2019 a plastic bricks factory was constructed - the first of its kind in Africa.

However, for all Ivorian children to go to school, the country needs another 30,000 classrooms. In a first phase, **UNICEF has committed to build 528 classrooms with plastic bricks, enabling 25,000 kids to gain access to education**.

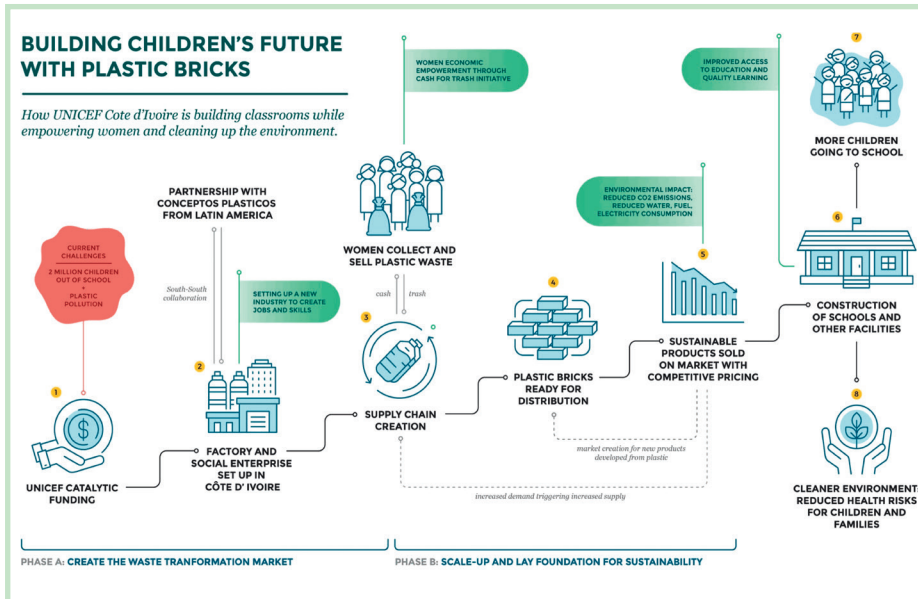
In addition to the classrooms, the **schools will also provide access to water and sanitary facilities**, an important component for a child-friendly school, as well as continuous training for teachers and social workers.



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The advantages of the plastic bricks

- The interlocking blocks allow for a much faster construction, reducing construction time to 3 weeks instead of 6 months on average
- 10,000 local jobs have been created thanks to this revolutionary concept
- 20% lighter, lower maintenance costs and more durable than conventional bricks. The bricks are waterproof, fire retardant, well insulated and wind resistant.
- The bricks are easy to assemble – only a hammer is required
- All types of plastic are suitable, except PVC.



Story from the field

Anne, 8 years old, from Toumodi-Sakassou:
 "I am very impressed by the big chalkboard and cleanliness of our classroom. It's a lot better than before, there is even electricity and we now have a toilet. We no longer need to go to the bush.

In class, we learn to take care of the environment and how we can build schools like ours, or other buildings, using recycled plastic. I have a lot of hope because if it can be done here it can also be done in other villages and benefit more children.
My school is the most beautiful in the world! "



Financing examples

5,950 €

1,351 bricks or the construction of one classroom

10,000 €

25,000 kilos of plastic recycled into bricks

33,000 €

school supplies for 1,400 children and teachers' training

100,000 €

access to toilets and hand washing facilities for 40,000 children



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