

PLASTIC BRICKS 2.0: FROM WASTE TO OPPORTUNITY - EDUCATION FOR EVERY CHILD

Invest in education, jobs, and a cleaner environment.



Every day, the mountain of plastic waste in Côte d'Ivoire continues to grow. At the same time, millions of children lack a place to learn. Plastic Bricks 2.0 transforms waste into opportunity for education, employment, and a cleaner environment. Building on the success of Plastic Bricks 1.0, we are now focusing on scaling up. Together, we can provide thousands of children with a safe place to learn while protecting the environment as communities benefit from new job opportunities and a healthier living environment.

Plastic Bricks 1.0: Proven success. Since 2019:

- More than 500 classrooms have been built.
- More than 77,000 teachers have been trained in improving skills and grammar.
- A total of approximately 25,000 children have gained access to education.
- New prototypes have been developed from recycled plastic waste, including school desks.

Of the large amount of plastic waste produced in Abidjan, only a fraction is reused. As a result, much of this waste ends up in the environment, contributing to groundwater pollution and disease outbreaks. In addition, the country faces significant challenges in education, including a shortage of classrooms for children.

4 results we aim to achieve between 2026 and 2030:

- More classrooms - 900 new classrooms made from recycled plastic.
- School furniture - 3,000 school desks made from plastic waste.
- Digital opportunities - Digiboxes for remote villages.
- Education quality - Training for teachers.

This will give 45,000 children access to quality education.

Côte d'Ivoire

COUNTRY INFO



Population:

31 MILLION



15 MILLION

Children under 18 representing 50% of the total population

67 CHILDREN

Out of every 1,000 births, children die before the age of five.



2,3 MILLION CHILDREN

and young people are still not attending school.



Why is more support needed?

In 2019, UNICEF launched a pilot project in which plastic waste was reused to build classrooms. Women from vulnerable communities received training in collecting and processing plastic and sold the collected waste at a fair price to the first recycling plant in Côte d'Ivoire, which became operational in 2020. Thanks in part to the support of donors from the Netherlands, more than 500 "plastic" classrooms had been built by the end of 2025, giving 25,000 children access to education.

Despite these successes, challenges in the country remain significant: approximately 2.3 million children in Côte d'Ivoire are still out of school. By 2030, an estimated 30,000 new classrooms will be needed, while an additional 15,000 existing classrooms made of traditional materials are in poor condition and urgently require rehabilitation.

Building on the lessons learned from the pilot, UNICEF now aims to scale up the initiative, using sustainable plastic while simultaneously creating social impact for women and children.

What does UNICEF do?

In Plastic Building Blocks 2.0, UNICEF focuses on the following components:

Improved access to education and reduced environmental pollution

We create more opportunities for children to learn by building new classrooms from recycled plastic and renovating existing ones. From the summer of 2026 onwards, our goal is to deliver approximately 240 plastic classrooms each year, significantly expanding access to safe and sustainable education. All classrooms will be equipped with school furniture, also made from recycled plastic waste sourced locally.

Improving the quality of education

UNICEF strengthens the education system and improves education quality by training teachers, enabling them to further develop their pedagogical skills so children can learn to their full potential. Teachers also receive training in inclusive education, including support for children with visual or motor impairments, children who are deaf, and children with autism.

Equality and (digital) education for every child

In remote villages without internet or electricity, UNICEF brings education directly to children through DIGIBOXES: portable cases filled with tablets and pre-installed lessons. Traveling teachers, often on motorcycles, use these to teach in communities where no full school yet exists, for example because too few children live there. This way, even the youngest children have the opportunity to learn and later transition to regular schools.



Safiatou, seven years old, stands beaming in front of the blackboard in a classroom built entirely from plastic building blocks. It is her first year in primary school, and standing beside her is her teacher, Kone Korotoum. Thanks to the Plastic Building Blocks 1.0 programme, Safiatou and her classmates now have a safe and sustainable place to learn.

For Safiatou, this means more than just a school building: it is a step towards a hopeful future filled with opportunities. And for Kone, it means being able to further develop her passion for education and give her students the care and attention they deserve. With Plastic Building Blocks 2.0, UNICEF aims to offer many more children like Safiatou the space and opportunities to reach their full potential.

Donation examples:

€85 – Three children are given a permanent place in the classroom with a school desk made from recycled plastic.



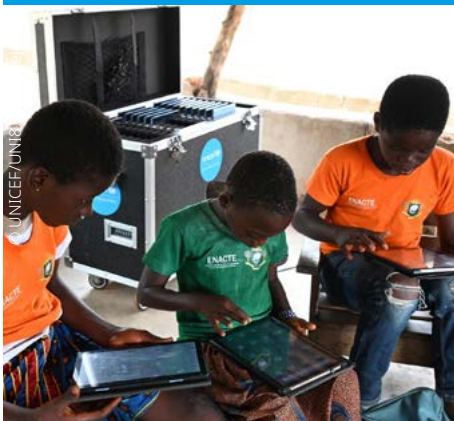
€500 – More than 15 children gain a permanent place in the classroom thanks to more than five school desks made from recycled plastic waste.



€12.000 – Sufficient building blocks are produced to construct a new classroom.



€13.000 – A Digibox brings digital learning resources within reach.



€25.000 – A complete classroom is constructed, including the foundation, roof, and windows.



UNICEF Nederland
 Bezuidenhoutseweg, 74
 2594 AW Den Haag
 Nederland
 088 444 96 66,
 info@unicef.nl
 unicef.nl

For more information, please contact:

unicef 
 for every child