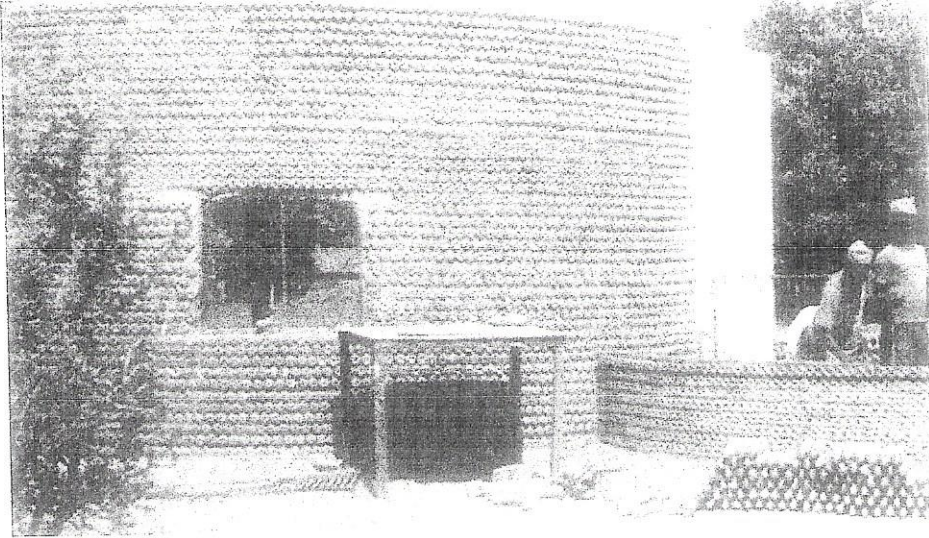


Nigeria's plastic bottle house

By Sam Otukeya BBC Africa, Yelwa



Nigeria's first house built from discarded plastic bottles is proving a tourist attraction in the village of Yelwa.

The bottles, packed with sand, are placed on their side, one on top of the other and bound together with mud.

Twenty-five houses, which will be available to rent, are being built on this estate on land donated by a Greek businessman and environmentalist.

Each house - with one bedroom, living room, bathroom, toilet and kitchen - uses an estimated 7,800 plastic bottles.

This "bottle brick" technology started nine years ago in India, South and Central America.

Yahaya Ahmed of Nigeria's Development Association for Renewable Energies, estimates that a bottle house will cost one third of what a similar house made of concrete and bricks would cost.

"Compacted sand inside a bottle is nearly 20 times stronger than bricks," he says.

The bottle houses are also ideally suited to the hot Nigerian climate because the sand insulates them from the sun's heat, helping to keep room temperatures low.

And because of the compact sand, they are bullet-proof.

The project is also hoping to help to remove children who do not go to school from their life on the streets.

Word box:

discarded: abandonnées

bound together with mud: lié avec de la boue

suited to: adapté à

bullet-proof: pare-balles