



**SUSTAINABLE
LIVING**
YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS AWARDS

in partnership with:



Unilever

HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES YOUNG SUSTAINABILITY ENTREPRENEUR PRIZE

Oscar Andres Mendez Gerardino, 34

Initiative: Conceptos Plasticos

Country of impact: Colombia

A Colombian enterprise that recycles plastic and transforms it into construction materials that are used to provide high-quality, safe, low-cost housing.



In Latin America, Africa and Asia 40% of people don't have access to formal housing. In Bogota alone 750 tonnes of plastic is sent to landfill every day. It can take up to 500 years for plastic to biodegrade and 75% of plastic produced globally is either sent to landfill or not formally disposed of and so is left to pollute the environment.

Providing a home

Founded by Oscar Andres Mendez Gerardino, 34, in 2010, Conceptos Plasticos is a Colombian enterprise that aims to replace informal settlements with decent housing whilst reducing waste plastic.

Using an industrial process called extrusion, Conceptos Plasticos uses multilayered plastics, mixtures of different plastics and rubber to make quality construction materials. These construction materials are used to build low-cost, safe, durable housing that can be broken down and rebuilt elsewhere if necessary.

Building decent homes from waste plastic

It takes five days for four people to assemble a house of 40 square metres. Conceptos Plasticos have built nearly 1,500 square metres of houses and shelters in several regions across Colombia and are currently obtaining permits for construction of 500 square metres more in the city of Cartagena. They have used over 300 tonnes of post-industrial and post-consumer plastics in the process. In 2016, Conceptos Plasticos want to build 240 new homes, benefiting 1,200 people. By 2018 they plan to build 600 a year, positively impacting 3,000 people.

View Oscar's competition entry [here](#).