

Mobile telephone recycling facility launched in Côte d'Ivoire

Orange and Emmaüs International has launched its 5th African mobile telephone recycling facility in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. To mark the event, a first container loaded with 10 tonnes of mobile waste will leave the Côte d'Ivoire for recycling in France.



Mobile use is growing fast in Africa, making it a major environmental issue. There are already 500 million mobile devices on the continent, as well as millions of discarded handsets which are often simply thrown away or burned due to the lack of recycling facilities in the majority of African countries. For Orange, which is present as a network operator in 20 African countries, the recycling of mobile phone waste is one of the major commitments of its CSR policy. Thanks to the workshops set-up by Orange and Emmaüs International, this waste is now being collected for transport to France for recycling.

Recycling, a responsible initiative

At each facility, which is run by six local employees, more than 10 tonnes of mobile waste is collected each year and sent to France for recycling.



In total, since 2010, more than 140 tonnes of mobile waste have already been sent to France for recycling, and over 30 long-term jobs have been created at the African facilities. Over the next five years, Orange and Emmaüs International plan to continue opening new collection facilities, confirming their partnership on this project, which contributes to local economies and social welfare while protecting the environment.

In France, a young company called Morphosis takes direct delivery of containers of waste from the five African collection facilities at the port in Le Havre. On receipt of the containers, Morphosis sorts the waste into different types by material. The next step is to process the waste, extracting the rare metals that can be re-used in the manufacture of new products and devices. Morphosis is a particularly inventive and effective player in this new market in France.

Since 2009, Orange has been working in France with Ateliers du Bocage (members of Emmaüs International), which recycle used mobile devices collected from Orange stores or internally in France. This social-reintegration organisation aims to give work to vulnerable people, bringing them back into the jobs market. The mobile devices collected are sorted into two categories in the workshops run by Ateliers du Bocage:

- Those which can be re-used are reconditioned and then sold in developing countries
- Those which no longer work are recycled

Since 2010, Orange has been organising an annual collection event in France for used mobiles, chargers and batteries through its 1,200 stores in mainland France. All profits from these large-scale actions are then paid into the "Africa Project" run by Emmaüs International.

Source: APO