ZETU Africa improves access to education in Africa with a backpack that transforms into a school chair.



Project information

Project code	2023 M1
Sector	Manufacturing
Funding	Loan
Country	Uganda
Location	Kampala, Uganda

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The entreprise

Launched in 2019, ZETU Africa is a design and product company that manufactures a range of bags (laptop bags, casual bags and travel bags) sold wholesale in 4 countries (Uganda, Rwanda, Germany and Japan) and retail via the Zetu website.

The company's profits are used to produce an original product: the SeatPack chair. It is a backpack that turns into a bamboo classroom chair with a writing surface and a waterproof container for sanitary napkins.

The production facility was opened in Kampala in mid-2021 and currently employs 9 full-time and 15 part-time staff (for bamboo harvesting and refining).

ZETU currently has a catalogue of 32 bag designs and 10% of the profits are used to fund SeatPacks.

To date, 1,070 SeatPacks have been produced and 520 are in use in 10 schools in 9 districts in Uganda.

The year 2020/2021 closed with an income of €31,000 and the year 2021/2022 with an income of €59,000.

The business project

Arnold Leon Mugagga, founder and CEO of ZETU Africa, was born and raised in Uganda.

Convinced that the lack of classroom furniture is a hindrance to children's education, and with a background in architecture and sustainable design, Arnold designed this original product: the SeatPack.

In sub-Saharan Africa, the number of school children lacking classroom furniture is estimated at over 95 million.

Zetu Africa's goal is to generate profits by designing and producing locally, and selling consumer products sustainably in the global market while dedicating a portion of its profits to the manufacture of a SeatPack.

"Buy one, give one": every sale of a product from the range helps fund a SeatPack for a school child.

SeatPack is also sold to education impact organisations that want to improve the quality of primary and secondary education.

Each Zetu Africa bag has a QR code that allows customers to remotely track the SeatPack classes that their purchase has funded over the years.

Why OVO believes in this project

The SeatPack directly prevents the felling of trees by replacing wooden furniture with bamboo furniture.

These have a pouch that allows girls to stay in school while discreetly taking care of their menstrual hygiene.

The SeatPack costs 80% less than any other school furniture on the market.

The SDG assessment showed a positive impact on 10 SDG targets.

Furthermore, the OVO coaching team was impressed by the professionalism of Arnold and his team. Furthermore, his kindness and willingness to make the world a better place is a positive inspiration for his team.

Requested investment

Zetu is requesting a loan of €48,000, of which €34,000 is for investments in machinery, computer equipment, cars and vans and €14,000 is for working capital (only for the bulk purchase of raw materials).

The loan is repayable over a period of 24 months, with a grace period of 12 months to launch the growth strategy.

According to the OVO coaches, the financial plan pays off after one year.

Zetu has agreed to pledge current assets as collateral for working capital representing a book value of €6,000 and further guarantees are given for investments to the value of €34,000.

Topic

- Hygiene
- Innovative
- Locally based
- Literacy
- Young people
- Ecosystems