



Oribags Innovations : Uganda

Recovering agricultural wastes to manufacture hand-made paper bags, printing paper and jewellery

Project description

Oribags Innovations, established in 2008, is a social and environmental enterprise that manufactures hand-made paper bags, printing paper and jewellery from agricultural wastes. It recovers waste paper and natural fibres in an environmentally-friendly way to transform them into products for the local market.



Business model

Agricultural wastes are collected and purchased from local farmers and other groups. The raw material is processed at the incubation centre of the Uganda Industrial Research Institute (UIRI).

At present, the products are marketed locally and primarily sold to supermarkets and small craft and gift shops. The paper bags provide a better alternative to the environmentally-hazardous polythene bags used in packaging.

Scaling up activities in 2011

- Establish an Oribags paper processing pilot plant that will process 40 tons of paper pulp per day in order to diversify and scale-up the existing range of products.
- Extend the initiative's marketing activities to commercialise Oribags' products regionally and on the national market.
- Train youth and women in the region in paper making and other entrepreneurship skills.
- Enhance the management capacity of Oribags Innovations.

Immediate needs

- Financial assistance and links to funding bodies to enable production scale-up.
- Assistance with the capacity building of local communities involved in paper processing.
- Support in conducting market research and developing a marketing strategy to attract new customers.
- Assistance in risk management issues.





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Partnership

- ❶ **Oribags Innovations Ltd.** is responsible for waste collection, processing and marketing the products.
- ❷ **Uganda Industrial Research Institute** provides processing facilities and technical support as well as marketing support.
- ❸ **Uganda Women Entrepreneurs Association** supports the initiative in terms of networking, mentoring and entrepreneurship training.
- ❹ **Local farmer groups** provide raw materials and benefit from skills training and outreach programmes.



Social, environmental and economic impacts

Social impact: Oribags contributes to the empowerment of women and youth by providing training in paper making, jewellery manufacturing and entrepreneurship skills.

Environmental impact: By producing ecologically sound paper bags, the initiative provides a good alternative to the environmentally hazardous polythene bags.

Economic impact: By employing youth and women in the production process and purchasing agricultural wastes from farmers, the initiative generates employment and income for the local communities. The initiative also transforms local communities through skills training.

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SEED Partners

SEED is hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Other current partners are the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature); and the governments of Germany, India, the Netherlands, Norway, South Africa, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.



About the SEED Initiative

The SEED Initiative identifies and supports promising small scale social and environmental entrepreneurs around the globe, entrepreneurs that while working towards a greener economy also tackle poverty, marginalisation and social exclusion.

SEED provides these social entrepreneurs with know how and networks, taking the lessons learnt at local level up to decision-makers to promote evidence-based policy making.

More information: www.seedinit.org

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