

Norfund invests in Kinetic Holdings Limited's expansion into a sanitary pad production facility in Uganda

Norfund, the Norwegian Investment Fund for developing countries is pleased to announce a strategic minority equity investment in Kinetic Holdings Limited (popularly known as **Kensta Group** in East Africa), a prominent East African distribution and manufacturing business. Kensta has been in existence for over 60 years, with a passion for doing business, connecting the world to Africa and enriching the lives of the people it serves. Kensta is dedicated to the supply of raw materials to the printing & packaging industry and the manufacturing of everyday essential paper-based products.

This partnership will make a significant impact on the regional economy and is set to accelerate Kensta's manufacturing capability to produce world class products, expand its product portfolio, broaden its market reach, and drive meaningful social and economic impact across East Africa. The investment will support the construction of a new production facility in Uganda dedicated to the manufacturing of sanitary pads. This investment is expected to generate new employment opportunities and improve access to affordable period products for women and girls. In addition to delivering strong development impact, the investment is anticipated to yield a sustainable financial return.

Founded in 1965, Kensta has established itself as a leading player in the East African print Industry, known for its commitment to quality, innovation, and sustainable practices.

Both partners are committed to social responsibility, with initiatives aimed at creating jobs, supporting local supply chain partners, and investing in community development programs focused on education, health, and environmental sustainability.

"Lack of access to menstrual hygiene products prevent girls and women from attending school and participating equally in society alongside boys and men. Improving access to affordable products is an important contribution to gender equality. Furthermore, it is an investment that creates jobs which are crucial for poverty reduction," said Minister of International Development Åsmund Aukrust.

"By investing in Kinetic Holdings, Norfund is helping scale a local solution to a widespread challenge, period poverty, that hinders education and dignity for millions of girls and women. Supporting the local manufacture of sanitary pads is a tangible step towards inclusive development and economic empowerment," says Donald Muchiri Kariuki, Investment Manager at Norfund.

Since its inception in 1997, Norfund has invested in companies that create jobs, an essential driver of poverty reduction, in some of the world's most challenging markets. Despite the inherent risks, Norfund has achieved an average annual IRR of 5.1% in investment currency, or 8.6% in NOK. By the end of last year, companies in which Norfund is invested employed 712,000 people and collectively paid NOK 41.4 billion in taxes and fees.

Kensta CEO, Priyesh Shah said, "This investment marks a transformative chapter for our company. With Norfund's involvement, we will accelerate our growth strategy, enhance our operational capabilities, and continue to provide exceptional service to our clients. We look forward to expanding our reach and impact in the regional market with a shared vision for sustainable regional development. Together, we aim to create lasting economic and social value."