



Upcycling waste

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UPCYCLED ACCESSORIES CREATE GREEN AWARENESS IN RWANDA

 WORK & LIFESTYLE

Angaza repurposes plastic waste from old advertising campaigns and other sources to create unique fashion accessories, such as purses and pencil cases, and aims to create more green employment opportunities and awareness.

We've previously covered initiatives that turn non-degradable plastics into useful objects, whether as [colourful blocks](#) for use in community projects or [wall foundations](#) that use reclaimed ocean plastics for building new homes, and now a project in Rwanda is continuing this upcycling revolution.

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Angaza (a Swahili word that means 'to illuminate') was conceived as a way to raise awareness about plastic waste and encourage locals and industries to consider the benefits of a green economy as well as demonstrating ways to contribute. Co-founder Maria Mayanja began by collecting plastic waste from advertising billboards, from which she began crafting bag design prototypes. After joining up with co-founder Monica Umwari and enlisting local tailor Felicien Mutabazi, Angaza now produces an array of brightly colored vinyl accessories, such as gym bags, laptop carriers, pencil cases, iPad wallets and more; each product a unique result of the plastic it was derived from, including collections from particular events or advertising campaigns. Already employing women from local communities to help craft the products, Angaza hope to continue working in schools to educate the next generation. Angaza products can be purchased from its online store, where businesses can also reach out to donate materials from old campaigns.

What other waste products can be upcycled into usable objects? When we consider that **old tennis balls** have already been made into speakers, the potential for upcycling seems almost limitless!

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