

# Journal on Challenges and the Survival of Early Start Ups Amidst Covid19 in Zambia

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early start ups amidst COVID-19 in Zambia.  
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**Abstract:-** Small and medium businesses (SMEs), sometimes known as start-ups, are the engines of every economy. The Corona Virus pandemic has quickly escalated into a global issue that has wreaked havoc on small businesses. As a result of the virus, start-ups are either shutting down or shrinking. This explains why small businesses lack the capital to defend themselves against the financial consequences of the pandemic.

Many have extrapolated that the coronavirus pandemic has been more devastating to the financial system than the latest recession of 2008. The present day's chaotic economic environment is the reason start-ups fail at a higher rate. Then again, start-ups which innovate in difficult periods, including the pandemic, are also at risk of high tiers of fulfilment.

To help start-ups stay in enterprise and combat the negative situations, this article identifies the challenges start-ups come upon due to COVID-19, and offers progressive, realistic, and tactical strategies to navigate the risks and uncertainty that come with the pandemic in Africa. Zambia will be used as the primary instance in this paper.

This paper is written since, currently, most of the literature on COVID-19 concentrates on healthy topics with restricted publications on start-ups. In addition, there's no literature on how the pandemic has affected countries in Africa, consisting of Zambia. We illustrate how start-ups must mitigate the effects of this crisis through strategic improvements, particularly alliances and partnerships, pivoting, commercial enterprise mapping, and low-putting results. Then we identify the challenges encountered, particularly in finance, human assets, support offerings, and confined supply chains. Lastly, we defined measures that would be adopted by policymakers to assist start-ups facing challenges in surviving the pandemic environment.

**Keywords:-** Start-ups, demanding situations, COVID-19, innovative, Strategic, Zambia.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The corona virus ailment (COVID-19), with its related bad impacts, such as shutdowns, has entangled start-ups with lots of them clinging for survival. COVID-19 is a currently growing strain of coronavirus that may infect your nostrils, sinuses, or throat. The disease will become as soon as it is called "2019 novel coronavirus," Pathaka, (2021). The COVID-19 outbreak is a double-edged sword, and its dramatic spread the world over has a devastating effect on both humans and businesses such as start-ups. The disease is even more challenging for numerous African start-ups who cannot completely participate in the economy because of the decreased comparatively cheap activities brought about by the virus, such as limited capital.

The African Union and different local financial groups that provided public fitness discussion boards acted in a well-timed manner. They called for a joint African approach in February 2020 (United nations, 2020). Even with such early preparations and interventions, like some other international economic health problems, the coronavirus managed to find its way onto the African continent, affecting all fifty-four, (54) countries. Most of the COVID-19 infections have been reported from South Africa, which also noticed the birth of a new strain of COVID-19 known as SARS-CoV-2 in December 2020. The new stress quickly spread to other African nations such as Zambia, Zimbabwe, and countries such as the UK, Germany, Brazil, and the U.S.A. Following virus mutations, including the lethal Delta and the current Omicron of November 2021, have continued to affect humans as well as enterprise.

On the enterprise facet, COVID-19 has negatively impacted on start-ups. Typically, start-ups are agencies with less than five years of existence that are shaped with the aid of proprietors called entrepreneurs, who're inclined to organize resources and provide solutions to their communities with the aid of seizing business possibilities that relate to troubles affecting them. Start-ups are founded by entrepreneurs to fill in a gap or to remedy a problem, with the capability of seizing an enterprise possibility. Fontanel, (2020)

In Zambia, a small business, also referred to as a start-up, is described as "an enterprise whose gross investment, excluding land and buildings, does not now exceed 50 thousand Zambian Kwacha (ZMW) or USD 2380". Inside the production and processing sector, it is 10 thousand ZMW (USD 476). Within the trading and carrier zone, its miles are defined in terms of annual turnover that does not

exceed 10 thousand ZMW with as many as 30 employees, Chisala, 2008).

While the challenges faced by start-ups all over the world during COVID-19 are similar, these difficulties are exacerbated in countries such as Zambia with vulnerable economies. This is critical for establishing the facts about Zambia's COVID situation.

## II. OBJECTIVES

- To perceive the demanding situations faced through Zambian start-up Amidst the COVID19
- To demonstrate innovating solutions with the intention to help Start-ups reduce the poor effects of COVID 19
- To offer recommendation for sustainability of Start-ups now and after COVID19

## III. LITERATURE OVERVIEW

### A. General International challenges confronted through Start-ups.

Start-ups face lots of demanding situations globally, such as stiff opposition, unrealistic expectations of their growth, control of price range, cyber safety, and earning the trust of clients (Creately weblog, 2020). Other problems are loss of finances, infrastructure, and lack of guidance from experts Hazarika, (2018). The extra challenges consist of finite assets, locating their area of interest, and locating and managing employees and customers (Forbes, 2020).

Considering the advent of COVID-19, greater and more demanding situations are being determined that frustrate the efforts of those start-ups. However, Forbes (2020) argues that no undertaking within the global can restrict an overzealous entrepreneur's capability to launch a successful commercial enterprise.

### B. Worldwide COVID-19 challenges.

The above issues have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 disaster. The pandemic's negative effects have highlighted the vulnerability of start-ups more than ever before. The pandemic has had a significant negative impact on developing economies, particularly in the personal sector. IFC (2021). The impact is heightened as the virus continues to mutate, introducing new complications that students who are unable to keep up with the rapid changes are unaware of. Salamizadel et al (2020). COVID-19 presents additional challenges to start-ups, such as corporate closures, a lack of manpower, and stringent travel requirements, Peterson et al, (2021). Start-ups are essential gear that sell financial boom, create jobs and are the catalysts of innovation (OECD 2020). Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, this position is even extra essential. The landscape of doing business has changed due to the pandemic impact (Vanessa, 2020). The subsequent are the outcomes of COVID-19 Pandemic as mentioned by the subsequent countries.

Kuckertz (2020), mentioned that German Start-ups had felt the results of COVID-19 in the form of. Lower income and consistent costs, low innovation, and government assets that were directed closer to the pandemic. For example, start-ups are no longer bankable. However, a few start-ups have

remained resilient within the pandemic due to the fact their companies stay applicable no matter the disaster Williams et al., (2017).

In the United Kingdom, Stephan (2020), it became pronounced that 61% of entrepreneurs had decreased in trading sports, decreased new organization registration, delayed order cancellation, and past due bills. Start-ups fail to benefit from pandemic relief schemes without a one-year revenue file.

In China, Jinzhou (2020) reported a ninety percent commercial enterprise loss two weeks after the coronavirus struck. Earnings in the travel, retail, and hospitality industries fell. Corporations were either permanently or temporarily closed. Workers were laid off to reduce costs. Some scrambled for enterprise investment. Moreover, Genome (2020) said how Chinese language ecosystems declined by 50% investment months after the COVID-19 disaster hit.

### C. Global Pandemic and Finances

The global platform was created by means of the economic forum to help combat the Corona Virus pandemic. Its purpose became to pull resources from all interested parties and reduce the terrible impacts of the pandemic. (Global Financial Forum, 2020). At the same time, governments the world over have rolled out exceptional alleviation plans for organizations (the World Financial Forum, 2020). Examples are as follows:

In Germany (Ministry of power and economic affairs, 2020), the government introduced a resource of €2 billion tailored for start-up booster programmes. The UK authorities had a scheme that issued convertible loans of £one hundred twenty-five thousand to £five million for innovation to groups facing pandemic difficulties (Government of the United Kingdom, 2020). Moreover, a 4 billion fund became available by way of France to aid start-ups' liquidity (The BPI France, 2020). The US authorities had a \$2.3 trillion pandemic mitigation plan, of which \$337 billion was turned into a reserve for start-ups (OECD, 2020). South Africa also carried out a debt relief scheme for small-to medium-sized corporations experiencing financial decline because of the pandemic. (South African government, 2020). The Zambian government via its crucial financial institution introduced ZMW 10 billion stimulus bundle for SMEs to assist ease COVID-19 associated financial and economic damage on Zambian companies and its Gross home Product (Standard bank, 2020).

### D. Examples of global improvements

Adversity from crises creates opportunities and challenges for start-ups. Because of the external stress, this necessitates innovation to evolve to new settings. (Debet et al., 2020) Because revolutionary companies are frequently exposed to a wide range of crises, being modern is a prerequisite for being resilient and adaptable, Linnenlueckie, (2017). South Korea, for example, reacted differently to the Pandemic, employing early Start-ups to combat COVID-19. South Korea determined that innovation would be the solution to the worst covid outbreaks (Covid-19). Sharon (2020). South Korean Start-ups began developing diagnostic

tests that used artificial intelligence to manage their infection charge. The Korean authorities made it happen for start-ups by way of establishing new home windows of opportunities to resolve instantaneous troubles. Start-ups have been used as a combative device to manage the pandemic. The Korean government made it possible for start-ups by establishing new home windows of opportunity.

Different international locations like South Africa held a opposition for Start-ups to innovate and locate answers to counter COVID19. One revolutionary solution, the SMEgo platform simplified and reorganized the funding software technique for corporations and Funders, Rethabile (2020).

In united states of America, Abbott's identity NOW assisted doctors in detecting influenzas A and B, strep A, respiratory syncytial virus, and COVID-19. This is all carried out in less than 15 mins (The Scientist, 2020). More remarkable innovations had been said in fitness-tech start-ups together with, a tailor-made health tech, which plays a critical role in tracking Covid-19 mutations (Shekinah, 2021)

Senegal began generating a "Docteur car" multifunctional robot for caregivers to deal with patients without the danger of being infected with the virus. Moreover, an App referred to as "Alerte Santé Senegal" (Senegal fitness Alert) was made to prevent faux news and permit the public to get direct reputable health information. (Eagles, 2020)

#### IV. STRATEGIC INNOVATION

Strategic innovations may be used to mitigate the global monetary droop caused by the COVID-19 disaster. Strategic innovation is defined as the introduction of new growth strategies, product classifications, services, and/or business models that have a market impact and provide high levels of customer delight (Stanford Online, 2020). Entrepreneurs, on the other hand, face uncertainty every day and are expected to conform. Successful marketers must carefully analyse and search for new business opportunities while remaining vigilant to market changes. (The Ivy Journal, 2018) The current pandemic environment provides businesses worldwide, including Zambian start-ups, with an opportunity to restructure business activities, resulting in higher economies. The situation in Zambia is dire and encouraging strategic innovation must be planned. A rapid response is needed to direct interest for start-up innovation. Kuckertz, (2020). Start-ups are anticipated to provide sustainable solutions now and after the COVID19 pandemic. The subsequent strategic innovations must be taken gain of:

##### A. Alliances and Partnerships

The results of the COVID-19 outbreak have fostered collaboration between people and groups. This has created a possibility for marketers to take a step away from common strategies of funding and move in the direction of forming partnerships. One superb instance of partnership is the revolutionary way of getting access to funding through unsecured lending schemes, which include village banking. Village banks particularly include low-profit marketers who shape a collective group that guarantees loans to each other.

(FINCA, 2016). Village banking has enabled new businesses to enter the market and participate in business activities. One instance is Moti Enterprise Zambia, which has created an internet village banking scheme wherein start-ups can store and get unsecured loans. Even though some village banking projects have caused several dishonesties amongst contributors, the schemes nonetheless provide start-ups with capital.

Additionally, Partnerships may be in shape of cooperatives. A co-operative is an enterprise involving a collection of individuals who come together voluntarily to deal with an unusual need. Cooperatives assist start-ups to form corresponding alliances via the benefit of each other's assets and understanding. Disaster durations, in conjunction with the COVID-19, frequently provide new opportunities for entrepreneurship and innovation. This will provide start-ups with essential equipment to deal with difficult fitness or economic conditions, as well as respond to changing business environments. (OCED, 2020). The eventual effect could be to innovate into a more powerful enterprise, which could mitigate issues brought on by way of the converting marketplace.

##### B. Pivoting

On occasion, the target market may reduce income revenue, resulting in the retrenchment of human employees. Then pivoting is essential. Pivoting means changing and redirecting an organization's strategy. Wharton, (2019). The COVID-19 outbreak may serve as a catalyst for long-lasting changes in consumer behaviour and desires. These changes may result in new business ventures for start-ups that can capitalize on new and futuristic trends in financial pastimes. Pivoting allows for changes to be made to meet new market demands. Pivoting is a quick-run scenario that can help start-ups stay competitive, grow, and ultimately save themselves from failure. Merrick, (2020).

The commercial enterprise environment undoubtedly changes and is likely to worsen in the event of the pandemic. Entrepreneurs want to maximize and preserve their business by adapting to new monetary conditions. Merrick (2020) further argues that groups want to prioritize commercial enterprise continuity by converting their enterprise models to mirror modifications inside the economic system and gain competitive gain via locating additional possibilities. As a result, start-ups are encouraged to seek out a competent team of workers who have solutions to today's new operations. This may suggest identifying people to drive the brand-new operations and training them in the specified skills. Similarly, a few people can be retired to pave the way for brand new expertise to power the business ahead.

For example, Shoprite Zambia pivoted their operations through the inclusion of service-primarily based corporations, together with cash switch, sales of online air tickets, airtime, and electricity further to their normal enterprise.

### C. Mapping

In the long run, pandemic innovators will need to revisit their business models. This is called business mapping. An instance is social entrepreneurship. A social entrepreneur is described as a person who makes use of ideas that have the capacity to solve network-based problems. Social organisations have two features, one of social improvement and another of monetary independence. They do that by means of developing more than a few business models that are tailor-made to fulfil corresponding desires. Social entrepreneurship will help to keep businesses afloat while also assisting in the resolution of societal ills caused by the pandemic. As an example, the Covid-innovator Sani foundation, a social business enterprise, is supplying internet schooling and training to avoid or allow for social distancing imposed via COVID-19.

The "wonderful recession" of 2008 has many incredible examples of companies which have reinvented themselves in a comparable economic climate as the pandemic. Numerous dress-making start-ups have reinvented themselves into making material face masks. A Zambian-based organization, Kings, has reinvented itself into the Zambia's largest producer of sanitizers. To succeed in the future, start-ups must find critical resources and methods, such as adopting a new purchaser value proposition.

### D. Exploring low placing fruits

Start-ups must make use of available local resources to continue jogging their business. The "low hanging fruit" refers to something that may be acquired easily or achieved to survive in business. Start-ups already have or should have had the necessary entrepreneurial skills to ensure their survival. Buheji and Ahmed (2020). Marketers must find a way to put fruit in their location to keep the business going.

Low-hanging fruits are generally used to begin with the most effective paintings first for attractive effects. Mackenzie (2020) argues that digitization of delivery chain strategies is one such low-hanging fruit by which businesses can start to devise and attain enterprise flexibility in opposition to delivery chain disruptions. In sales, it means a prospective patron who seems notably likely to buy the product, as compared to different, more reluctant prospective clients, Wily (2020).

### E. Create get entry to statistics structures

Accessing information by using any user could be very important. There is a need to create a platform for data that is without difficulty accessible by start-ups. As an example, "SMEgo" A revolutionary answer from South Africa brings funders and start-ups together. Start-ups will gain from this sort of platform by getting records in a timely manner. For example, e-Msika academy offers agriculture online schooling and agriculture-business consultancy, business investment and start-up possibilities in the agriculture zone are also published on their platform.

Making an investment in the internet and a willingness to pay to attend workshops and seminars to obtain current information is king. Creative campaign design and a diverse

marketplace media, distribution channels assist start-ups in receiving the required data in real time (OCED. 2020).

## V. THE ZAMBIAN START UP. CONTEXT

Zambian start-ups especially consist of informal traders. It's a well-known fact that the African private sector mainly consists of casual SMEs operating alongside huge corporations (Small Enterprise Improvement Organization, 2016). Over the previous couple of years, Zambian small business formation was on the upswing, with multiple international traders beginning their groups within the country. But, because of reduced profitable economic activities, mainly poor macro-financial surroundings coupled with the COVID-19, has exacerbated challenges confronted by start-ups.

### A. Monetary outlook of Zambia

According to a file through the international financial fund, (IMF, 2020), Zambia's monetary boom has slowed in recent years despite growing copper prices in recent months. The Zambian economy has contracted for the first time since 1989 by about 2.8% (IMF, 2020). However, it is predicted that the Zambian financial system will recover by 3% in 2021, following a historic contraction of 2.8 percent in 2020. COVID-19 impacts (Global Bank, 2022). The contraction indicates how the pandemic has disturbed and weakened an already struggling financial system. Developing countries are confronted with massive obstacles at some stage in the pandemic as those nations have restricted healthcare structures that demand development. Upgrades, however, should be carried out even as they meet the fundamental wishes of their residents (Maher, 2012).

Furthermore, Zambia is tasked with financing its loans. Since November 2020, debt payments have been missed. Zambia is having difficulty raising funds on the global market.

Based on the foregoing, it is abundantly clear that Zambia's financial environment is not conducive to economic sports and the welfare of start-ups. The number of newly registered groups through the Patents and Business Registration agency has increased in the last six months (PACRA). The Agency announced that a total of 22,113 corporations had been registered as of the end of the third quarter of 2019. This confirmed a 5.9 percent year-on-year increase from the 20,865 businesses registered in 2018. (PACRA, 2019). However, once registered, these companies do not engage in any economic activity.

Moreover, Zambia is likewise tasked with financing its loans. Having defaulted on debt payments because November 2020. Zambia is having a tough time raising cash in the global market.

Towards the above background, it's far tremendously clear that Zambia financial surroundings is not conducive for economic sports along with the welfare of start-ups. The beyond 6 months noticed an uptick in the quantity of newly registered groups via the Patents and businesses Registration agency (PACRA). The Agency announced that a combination of 22,113 corporations had been registered at

the give up of the 1/3 region of 2019. This confirmed a year-on-year growth of 5.9% from the 20,865 businesses registered in 2018 (PACRA, 2019). But these companies do not sign in any economic activity after registration.

However, Zambia's deteriorating macro-monetary, and COVID-19 have created opportunities to permit new small and micro-organizations that could survive the disaster to emerge. However, the transformation of its humans into lucrative entrepreneurship is so slow. This could be attributed to the demanding situations these entrepreneurs face, which have been multiplied by the emergency of COVID-19. The following are the challenges for start-ups in Zambia.

## VI. DEMANDING SITUATIONS CONFRONTED BY ZAMBIAN BEGIN-UPS

Zambian start-ups have failed to perform at the forefront of the financial system to provide answers desired now and after the pandemic. This is due to the difficulties they face. According to (The Ministry of Commerce, Trade, and Industry, 2003), SMEs in Zambia have stagnated due to numerous obstacles that impede their growth. Machoka (2020) agreed, pointing out that Zambian start-ups face challenges. Zambian entrepreneurs face two types of start-up challenges.

### A. General demanding situations faced by way of Zambian start-ups

The main challenges for Zambian start-ups are related to investment, advertising, and marketing, as well as a lack of entrepreneur ability and support mechanisms. These demanding situations are defined similarly below.

- It is difficult to gain access to various types of finance from traditional banks and microlending financial institutions. Start-ups cannot penetrate and grow in their first tiers of operation, frequently due to financial loss. Kaputula (2017) Some start-ups fail to enter the price range because they lack the necessary credit factors to relax the mortgage. Most lending institutions require collateral before approving a mortgage. Others ask for their loans to be insured. Newly formed companies do not have any assets to present as collateral and no aggressive benefit. As such, they are perceived as threat-inclined undertakings. Kaputula, (2017)'
- We have also witnessed a problem in advertising. Without advertising and marketing, the need for start-ups or products gradually falls. That is due to the fact there may be little, or no marketing achieved to attract able clients. The shortage of advertising can be attributed to restrained capital. There's additionally steep competition from massive entities that have the approach to put it on the market and source goods at a discounted rate.
- The shortage of group management talents stays a massive challenge for Zambian start-ups.
- The authorities are unfamiliar with start-up activities. This has manifested itself in policies and guidelines that limit start-ups and harm their operations. For example, tax laws

in Zambia favour investor corporations over local start-ups.

- Figuring out business opportunities: it's so unexpected to be aware that many people do now not know what enterprise to venture in, even with availability of price range. As an instance, in one Village banking institution, it was surprising on how contributors had been refusing to borrow the money simply because they did now not know what type to do with the money. It's also common practice to discover numerous start-ups engaged in the same type of commercial enterprise. Most often, this results in the oversupply of such goods and brings down the rate of purchases
- There are no mentoring or advisory offerings available to start-ups. In some cases, seed capital is provided to start-ups, and these entrepreneurs may then engage in commercial enterprise activities with no proper guidance or assistance. This effects business stagnation and failure.

### B. Pandemic related challenges of Zambian start-ups

The African continent has endured fundamental crises with regards to healthy issues including Malaria, Ebola, and different waterborne sicknesses along with cholera and dysentery. Maximum of these crises have negatively affected begin-ups. Information relating the manner the pandemic has affected Zambian start-ups isn't without problems to be had, therefore the author of this manuscript opted to study comparable guides and carried out qualitative studies to be supplied inside the subsequent section of this paper.

## VII. METHODOLOGIES

### A. Research and design procedure

This paper used on-line Surveys the use of open-ended questions and commentary. This technique allowed a better understanding of the demanding situations Zambian begin-ups are tasked with all through the pandemic. The qualitative nature of the layout become chosen because of the exploratory nature of the question.

### B. sources of statistics

Both primary sources and secondary resources have been used to accumulate information. The author used observations, and online survey interviews. Online survey was used due to the fact the approach is the most convenient given that the Pandemic continues to be lively. Other assets used covered web sites, press releases, databases, and reviews.

### C. Technique

We used open ended interview protocol to conduct our online survey and observed targeted organizations'.

### D. Scope of work

Groups much less than five years, registered, and in operation. The following information is based on an online survey from interested 100 Start-ups who participated. Notably most of them came from the Copper belt and Lusaka Provinces of Zambia.

## VIII. FINDINGS/ INFORMATION ANALYSIS

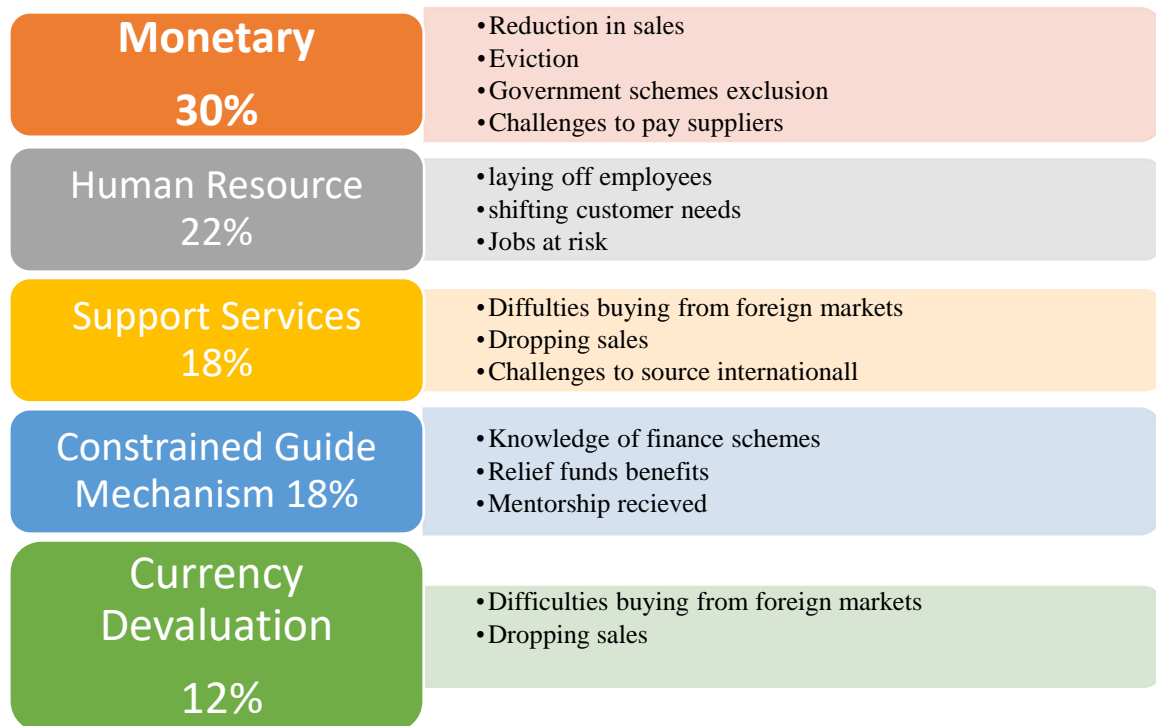


Fig. 1: Challenges affecting start-ups amid COVID 19 in Zambia

Source: Online survey conducted, 2021

(Figure 2) data summarizing the challenges faced in the COVID 19 with the aid of Zambian start-ups in percentages. And corresponding effects on start-ups which is discussed below.

#### A. Monetary challenges

The monetary project has the highest shape of challenge (30% on the pie chart). Zambia had gone astray in assembling economic goals in most sectors of the economy even before the pandemic. The economy was in financial trouble, with escalating poverty and debt crises. Pandemics have been difficult for businesses, especially start-ups. They operate with limited cash flow, and most of them no longer benefit from government schemes. They are also expected to quickly manage fluctuating consumption behaviour, vulnerable demand, and revenue losses. Because of the pandemic's disastrous economic consequences, various funding firms have slowed their investment projects in Zambia (Entrepreneur, 2020). Finally, we have seen a significant decrease in funding efforts. Starting a business in Zambia is difficult. Ultimately, we have witnessed an enormous decline in funding endeavours. Start-ups in Zambia are finding it difficult to raise prices in preparation for growth due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Africa, 2021). Moreover, macroeconomic, and social effects deteriorated in 2020 in Zambia as underlying macroeconomic imbalances had been compounded by way of the COVID-19 surprise (IMF Press release, No. 21/59, 2021).

Start-ups continue to pay fixed expenses such as rent and employee salaries, as well as additional costs such as electricity, despite experiencing a significant drop in income

or facing eviction. The fact that they are unable to obtain loans from commercial banks because they lack collateral makes it even more difficult during the pandemic. Certainly, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in significant sales declines for micro- and small businesses in Zambia Manda, (2021).

#### B. Human useful resource management

In general, most start-ups lack the financial resources to hire skilled workers. As shown in the diagramme above, human aid management accounts for 23% of all demanding situations. Several start-ups continue to offload their valuable human expertise throughout the pandemic. In fact, start-ups in the catering and accommodation sector reduced their workforce (business Survey file, Zambia, 2020). In today's pandemic environment, the Human Assets Department (HR) is under intense pressure to control existing personnel while also hiring new and critical competencies to sustain business.

#### C. Constrained guide Mechanisms

##### a) lack of expertise

Even when funding is available, start-ups lack the focus to discover new commercial enterprise opportunities caused by the pandemic. Almost 18% of new businesses are unaware of the available tax breaks. Many start-ups do not take full advantage of the government-provided remedy payments. The simple reason is that some people are unaware of such grants. Even if others are aware of the relief funds, they may encounter difficulties in accessing them. This is quite common among Zambians. In

many cases, only a few people benefit from such schemes, such as members assisting the ruling party. This can be attributed to existing and robust organizational systems that allow their members unrestricted access to such information.

#### b) Mentorship

Furthermore, most start-ups lack mentorship to guide them through their entrepreneurial journey. There is a more chaotic economic market within the pandemic because the stability that start-ups are used to has changed. This means that their tried-and-true business strategies may no longer be as effective as they once were. More than ever before, start-ups are challenged to obtain mentorship in this era. Finding the right mentorship guide is critical for guiding aspiring entrepreneurs to scale their start-ups for a successful boom. The high proportion of start-ups demonstrates that numerous constraints have been effectively reduced after mentorship, Butler et al (2016).

#### D. Restricted supply chains

Small businesses are bound to be vulnerable in the event of an economic disaster. There are fewer resources available for all agencies to make use of and to adapt to a new financial situation. Zambia has witnessed lockdowns from most of its foremost buying and selling partners, like South Africa, Dubai, and China. In truth, this money accounts for 16% of the full challenges for start-ups, as seen from the pie chart. Most of the Zambian start-ups rely on these international locations for the importation of their inputs. Similarly, mutation of the virus has precipitated these international locations to introduce travel restrictions such as the COVID-19 certificates for travel and the 72-hour COVID-FREE tests, which have increased the cost of doing business. A few corporations ceased operations. The World Trade Organization (WTO) has emphasized that disruption of the supply chain is a key feature of the pandemic, as major shipping and manufacturing centres have ceased operations. The report further states that imports were destabilized by using factory closures in production hubs just like the US, Dubai, China, and South Africa, though subsequently some nations reopened their borders (ICAEW, 2020). Furthermore, even in at-ease lockdown situations, South Africa remained hard to get entry using landlocked Zambia as an intermediate international location, while Zimbabwe remained under hard lockdown. Other demanding situations consist of currency devaluation and others.

### IX. CONCLUSION

COVID-19 is a global double-edged sword that affects both people and businesses, including start-ups. Because of their limited resources, start-ups have been more vulnerable to the pandemic's negative effects. The impact is exacerbated for start-ups because they already face challenges, but with the arrival of COVID-19, these challenges have been compounded. Again, it has become clear that it is difficult to control the initial and COVID-

related challenges as the virus continues to mutate, posing new challenges as the pandemic unfolds.

However, the situation cannot be ignored. Start-ups must be encouraged to innovate and provide modern solutions to the pandemic's challenges and devastating effects. These innovations include collaborations and alliances that map our business and technological transformation.

Furthermore, various governments released comfort funds to assist start-ups because they recognized that the future of their economies depended on innovations created by this class of marketers. Great strides have been made in countries, such as South Korea's use of start-ups to create diagnostic kits. Other innovations have also been noticeable in countries such as South Africa, the United States, Senegal, and various arena components.

Zambian Start-ups have not been immune to the pandemic; however, it is far in difficult times like the COVID19 crises when gaps are visible that start-ups can capitalize on and create sustainable solutions that they can develop into business possibilities. It is time for start-ups to step up their game and innovate to overcome the initial and ongoing challenges.

### X. RECOMMENDATIONS

#### A. Government

- Zambian policymakers may consider providing grants, loans, assurances, direct loans, and endowments to support the immediate financial needs of operational start-ups. They must consider the modern-day challenges of the pandemic on start-ups and deal with distinct survival desires.
- Zambian authorities must encourage research and development. This will encourage innovation and assist start-ups in coming up with new ideas. They must raise awareness of ongoing disruptive procedures and assist in the development of proposals, particularly those that guide start-ups in adapting to the pandemic. Legitimate systems with centralized information, including guide packages and best practices, and that connect to funders online, must be developed.
- Furthermore, encouraging entrepreneurial education must be at the heart of this. This could help displaced workers during the pandemic and ease the transition from unemployment to entrepreneurship.
- The government must work more closely with universities and colleges to promote and encourage graduates to pursue careers in innovation and entrepreneurship.

#### B. Start-ups

- Through pivoting and innovation, turn the pandemic's challenges into opportunities.
- Invest in the internet to obtain valuable information about investment opportunities.
- Pay for workshops and find a business mentor to guide and support the overall performance of the business.

### C. Big groups

- Must be willing to associate and support Start-ups via formation of must be willing to associate and support start-ups via the formation of businesses. Similarly large Similarly, large organizations must make a conscious decision to source input from local start-ups.

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