

Entrepreneur launches first Africa-designed smartphone

December 29 2012



The inventor of what has been billed as Africa's first tablet computer, Verone Mankou, displays the device on January 31, 2012 in the offices of his company, VMK, in Brazzaville. Congolese inventor Mankou has unveiled what he says is the first African-designed smartphone.

A Congolese inventor has unveiled what he says is the first African-designed smartphone.

Verone Mankou, 27, told AFP that the so-called Elikia, which means

"hope" in the local language, went on sale the day before in the [Republic of Congo](#).

Mankou, head of the company VMK, said the Android-powered device was on sale in only in Congo for now, but he planned to launch it in other countries.

The phone was initially due to go on sale in October but its launch was delayed "because of an explosion in demand," he said.

Though the phone is Congolese by design, it is manufactured in China. It costs about 130 euros (\$170)—a considerable sum in this central African nation.

The phone has a 3.5-inch touchscreen, 512 [megabytes](#) of RAM and a 650-Mhz processor. Its camera is five [megapixels](#), and it also comes with GPS and Bluetooth.

Mankou last year designed what was billed as Africa's first [tablet computer](#).

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