Tech Entrepreneurship Initiative ‘Make-IT in Africa’
Digital innovation for sustainable and inclusive development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project name</th>
<th>Tech Entrepreneurship Initiative ‘Make-IT in Africa’</th>
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<td>Commissioned by</td>
<td>German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)</td>
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<td>Project region</td>
<td>Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda and Tunisia</td>
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<td>Implementing Organisation</td>
<td>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH</td>
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<td>Duration</td>
<td>2017 - 2020</td>
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About Make-IT in Africa

The “Tech-Entrepreneurship Initiative Make-IT in Africa” promotes digital innovation for sustainable and inclusive development in sub-Saharan Africa. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH implements this project on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) as part of BMZ’s Digital Africa Initiative. In close collaboration with more than 20 corporate and financing partners, social enterprises, hubs and networks, ‘Make-IT in Africa’ supports an enabling environment for young entrepreneurs in the digital sector – to enable better access to finance, markets and skills.

The Challenge

Many tech entrepreneurs from Africa are still unable to make the leap to international market maturity. There is a lack of access to capital, markets, suitable personnel and digital infrastructure. In order to be successful, entrepreneurs need a functioning “entrepreneurial ecosystem” consisting of reference customers, investors, funding agencies and training partners. However, many ecosystems are fragmentary, and tech start-ups lack important contacts, adequate financing and opportunities for further development.

Our Approach

Digital entrepreneurship is the driving force for global economic growth and poverty alleviation as we look towards the future. Entrepreneurs have the potential to modernise economies and societies of their countries, discover innovative solutions to development challenges and create new opportunities for employment. Make-IT therefore promotes digital innovation for sustainable and inclusive development, focusing on entrepreneurs running early growth phase start-ups and the entrepreneurial ecosystem in five African countries through:

**Better access to finance** – by establishing a pan-African investment pipeline for tech start-ups, better information about financing opportunities and matchmaking start-ups with finance partners. Our collaboration partners include funds, investor networks, development banks and foundations.

**Better access to skills and talent** – by establishing a benchmark for partners in acceleration, hand in hand with innovation hubs, training institutes and other intermediaries of entrepreneurship promotion.

**Better access to markets** – by establishing business-to-business and public-private partnerships to provide exposure and matchmaking opportunities on local and international level. This includes study tours, trade fairs, B2B events, etc.

**Better collaboration within the entrepreneurial ecosystem** – by encouraging multi-stakeholder dialogue, knowledge sharing, and capacity development for and between partner institutions, associations and other intermediaries. Furthermore, with the partners of the Make-IT Alliance, we focus

- **Investment pipelines**, such as a joint start-up pool where investors can share offers with entrepreneurs
- **Online deal rooms for pitches and matchmaking** for tech start-ups and investors
- **Joint accelerators** (e.g. with Airbus, Merck, etc.) to allow for joint innovation of start-ups and corporates
- **Developing a mentorship pool** (with VC4Africa) to enable mentor-driven financing and learning
- **Pan-African knowledge sharing** for innovation hubs and intermediaries (e.g. at Transform Africa, i4policy)
Impact in Numbers

Since 2017, Make-IT has supported tech start-ups in their early growth and scaling phase and strengthened public and private intermediaries of the entrepreneurial ecosystem:

**Better access to finance**
For Ghana, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Cote de Ivoire, Rwanda and Kenya Investment Guides have been published: The guides aim at helping digital enterprises to understand and navigate the variety of financing options in their national markets. Through Make-IT activities, 480 digital entrepreneurs made use of needs-based match-making with investors.

**Better access to skills and talent**
Make-IT created the “Online Education for Start-ups” platform: Here, various for free online courses are made available. Since 2017, 450 entrepreneurs have completed online courses to enhance their skills.

**Better access to markets**
More than 200 digital enterprises have been promoted by Make-IT and its partners, and they created more than 3,800 jobs, around 44 per cent of these jobs were for female employees. In 2019, Make-IT supported Tech-Start ups were able to achieve a turnover of 38.8 Million US Dollar.
Through 27 study trips to Europe, many entrepreneurs were able to show their innovation to potential business and finance partners, and successfully established B2B and B2G cooperations.

16 Make-IT supported start-ups entered into innovation partnerships with IBM, SAP, AIRBUS, Merck, as well as another 16 start-ups who have won international competitions.

**Better collaboration within the entrepreneurial ecosystem**
20 key stakeholders from public and private sectors in each supported ecosystem improved their collaborations, creating a stronger and more supportive environment for digital entrepreneurship. More than 20 ecosystem meetups strengthen the cooperation of financiers, companies and associations in the local ecosystems of 5 countries and pan-African.

Organisational development of six national and international networks of innovation hubs and start-up supporters (e.g. Ghana Hub Network, Innovation Support Network Nigeria, Tunisian Startup Association, AfriLabs and others) with well over 1,000 members.

Policy consulting for five governmental project partners in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda and Tunisia, e.g. national guidelines for innovation and entrepreneurship promotion in Nigeria, Tunisian Startup Act, etc.

Policy consulting strengthens pan-African and international processes, e.g. Smart Africa Blue print Task Force "Startup and innovation ecosystem", EU AU Summit / Digital Economy Task Force, etc.

Impact in Stories

Ghanaian eHealth start-up ‘MedRx Ltd.’ tours Germany

The MedRx app helps patients in Ghana find the closest pharmacy which has their prescribed medication. Supported by Make-IT in Africa, its founder Hayford M. Brako participated in the Start-Up! Germany Tour 2019, which helped him make valuable contacts with important ecosystem players in Germany. Brako was motivated to start MedRx during his work as a professional pharmacist:

“I witnessed a patient who had a prescription for anti-snake serum search for his medication for almost 12 hours and end up losing his life. That awful incident provoked me to build a connection to most of my pharmacist colleagues in order to prevent such occurrences in the future.”

Launched in 2016, the MedRx app is now used by thousands of patients and healthcare professionals across Ghana to find their medications as well as compare prices. Determined to bring the benefits of MedRx to even more people, Brako is pleased to have now secured a loan to scale his business to the rest of Ghana and other parts of West Africa.