

Tech Entrepreneurship Initiative ‘Make-IT in Africa’

Digital innovation for sustainable and inclusive development – Q3/2020

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

About Make-IT in Africa

The Tech Entrepreneurship Initiative ‘Make-IT in Africa’ promotes digital innovation for sustainable and inclusive development in Africa. The 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 their Digital Africa Initiative.

In close collaboration with more than 20 corporate and financing partners, social enterprises, hubs and networks, ‘Make-IT in Africa’ supports a fostering environment for young entrepreneurs in the digital sector – to enable them better access to finance, markets and skills.

The Challenge

Many tech entrepreneurs from Africa still struggle to make the leap to international market maturity. There is a lack of access to capital, markets, suitable personnel and a 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

As we look towards the future, digital entrepreneurship is the driving force for global economic growth and poverty alleviation. Entrepreneurs have the potential to modernise the 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 providing:

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 a 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.

Partners of the **Make-IT Alliance** also support a focus on:

- **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 in 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. Transform Africa, i4policy)





Jan Schwaab

Tech Entrepreneurship Initiative «Make-IT in Africa»

Jan.schwaab@giz.de

www.make-it-initiative.org

Impact in Numbers

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

Better access to finance

Investment Guides have been published for Ghana, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Cote de Ivoire, Rwanda and Kenya. The guides aim at helping digital enterprises to understand and navigate the variety of financing options in their national markets. To pool this accumulated knowledge, in September 2020 the Online Investment Guide Africa was launched. Through Make-IT activities, **790 digital entrepreneurs** participated in Pitch Events with investors.

Better access to skills and talent

Make-IT created the **“Online Education for Start-ups”** platform, offering free online courses. Since 2017, **over 1000 entrepreneurs** have used the platform or have participated in online Masterclasses supported by Make-IT to enhance their skills.

Better access to markets

More than **450** digital enterprises from 23 African countries have been promoted by Make-IT and its partners, and they created more than **4900** jobs, around 54 per cent of these jobs were for female employees. Supported tech start-ups generated an average annual turnover of 71 000 €.

Through **30 study trips to Europe**, **207** start-ups were able to show their innovations to potential business and finance partners, and successfully establish B2B and B2G cooperations.

22 Make-IT supported start-ups entered into innovation partnerships with bi corporates, among others IBM, SAP, AIRBUS and Merck. Another **21 start-ups** have won international competitions.

Better collaboration within the entrepreneurial ecosystem

Make-IT has supported more than **60 actors** of the innovation ecosystem in their capacities and activities to improve the framework conditions for digital enterprises. **More than 30 key stakeholders** from the public and private sector confirm an improved collaboration in their ecosystem, creating a stronger and more supportive environment for digital entrepreneurship. **More than 65 ecosystem**

meetups strengthen the cooperation of financiers, companies, and associations in the local ecosystems of 5 countries and pan-African.

Make-IT has also contributed to the organisational development of four 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 is also provided for five governmental project partners in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda and Tunisia, e.g. on national guidelines for innovation and entrepreneurship promotion (Start-up Act).

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

Impact in Stories

Makers Assemble leverages Ghanaian ecosystem to fight COVID-19

Make-IT in Africa collaborated with Ghana Tech Lab on a new programme, Makers Assemble, to better leverage digital innovations in the fight against COVID-19. Launched in June 2020, the project has connected various ecosystem players to support local innovators in the production of pandemic-related solutions.

After a week-long bootcamp, selected innovators and makers converged to create prototypes using local resources and expertise. One of the major success stories has been 3D printing of medical-grade healthcare equipment, incl. face shields, ventilators, and respirators. The 3D-printed face shields have even received official approval as medical-grade Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) by the Ghana Food and Drugs Authority.

Makers Assemble thereby provides a new forum for ecosystem players to come together and share knowledge and resources, collaborating on the rapid scale production of innovations to help fight against the spread of COVID-19. As a result, promising new players and solutions are already emerging in Ghana.

Implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Tech Entrepreneurship Initiative Make-IT in Africa
Dag Hammarskjöld Weg 1, 65760 Eschborn, Germany
T + 49 (0) 6196 79 2102
make-it@giz.de
www.make-it-in-africa.org

Responsible Dr. Jan Schwaab

On behalf of Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Division 112 Digital technologies in development cooperation
Addresses of the BMZ offices
BMZ Bonn
Dahlmannstraße 4
53113 Bonn, Germany
T +49 (0)228 99 535-0
F +49 (0)228 99 535-3500
BMZ Berlin
Stresemannstraße 94
10963 Berlin, Germany
T +49 (0)30 18 535-0
F +49 (0)30 18 535-2500
poststelle@bmz.bund.de
www.bmz.de