Tech Entrepreneurship Initiative ‘Make-IT in Africa’

Promoting Economic Empowerment Through Digital Entrepreneurship

About Make-IT in Africa

The “Tech-Entrepreneurship Initiative Make-IT in Africa” promotes digital innovation for sustainable and inclusive development in 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.

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

Make-IT is operational in Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana, Tunisia, and Rwanda. In Nigeria, Make-IT works with local ecosystem actors to strengthen start-up development. The programme supports start-ups through these key interventions:

- Capacity building to improve business acumen
- Business to business (B2B) matchmaking to identify key industry partners
- Mentorship to provide expert-level support in specified business sectors
- Financial coaching to increase utilization of investment and funding opportunities
- Ecosystem activities to strengthen interactions and improve cooperation between key players
- Exposure trips to Germany to encourage cooperation with international companies and peer-to-peer learning between startups in Nigeria and in Europe

Impact in numbers...

To date, the Make-IT in Africa project has achieved the following in Nigeria:

- So far over 120 digital companies from West and East Africa have been supported by the project since the beginning in 2017, 35 of them from Nigeria.
Make-IT’s B2B matchmaking efforts in partnership with the Delegation of German Industry and Commerce in Nigeria (DGIC) resulted in a drone and logistics startup receiving $150,000 investment for business expansion from Gidi VC and a $300,000 investment from Platform Capital.

Make-IT’s exposure trips resulted in two logistics startups entering into deals with German construction and transportation companies.

Two FinTech start-ups supported by Make-IT finalized deals with financial institutions on expanding their savings and lending tools for customers.

A HealthTech startup was linked to a Silicon Valley HealthTech advisor, while a solar energy finance start-up was linked to a Swiss energy finance expert through Make-IT’s B2B matchmaking efforts.

Make-IT’s support to the Competitive African Rice Initiative (CARI) resulted in an AgricultureTech startup winning a four-year contract with CARI’s rice millers to build a management tool.

210 entrepreneurs in East and West Africa received $5,000 in seed funding through Make-IT’s partnership with the Tony Elumelu Foundation.

...and in stories

In 2018, Track Your Build expanded to Nigeria, where its headquarters is currently based.

“Our expansion from Sierra Leone to Nigeria was enabled by our place in the GIZ Make-IT programme which gave us the opportunity to have a physical presence in Nigeria. The expansion created some new roles and expanded our management team by three new team members.

Today, Track Your Build has broaden its range of services to include smart infrastructure management, oil and gas project mapping and monitoring, and telecommunications infrastructure inspections.

In 2019, the company is positioned to take advantage of all the business development relationships made in 2018.”

Edmond Nonie
MD of Track Your Build