Summary

We are thrilled to announce that the second Startup Weekend in Harare, Zimbabwe will take place November 21-23, 2014! This event builds on the awesome momentum created by the first ever Startup Weekend Harare in May of this year, only this time we're going even bigger by joining the Global Startup Battle – going head to head with Startup Weekend competitions worldwide! We're also building greater opportunity for collaboration within the Zimbabwe tech ecosystem with this second event: Hypercube Hub, which hosted the first Startup Weekend, will join forces with 5 other hubs in Zimbabwe to not only co-organize the next 54-hour marathon event but connect developers, designers and entrepreneurs to this vibrant and growing tech network.

Background

Startup Weekend is more than an event – it is a platform for aspiring entrepreneurs, and stands as the single largest starting point for new entrepreneurs around the world. To date, SW has hosted over 1,000 events across 110 different countries, with a total reach of over 100,000 entrepreneurs and 13,000 startup teams. In Zimbabwe, youth unemployment makes up 70% of the official 80% unemployment rate and the market for tech entrepreneurship represents great opportunities for young people to find and create jobs, driving a ripple effect of positive economic growth. The competition is aimed at inspiring Zimbabweans to leverage the talent they have right here in Harare, to share ideas and develop new technologies that transcend the sense of socio-economic isolation Zimbabwe has experienced in the past decade, getting youth plugged into networks of developers and tech entrepreneurs in other parts of Africa and beyond.

All Startup Weekend events follow the same basic model: anyone is welcome to pitch their idea and receive feedback from their peers. Teams organically form around the top ideas (as determined by popular vote) and then it's a 54 hour frenzy of business model creation, coding, designing, and market validation. The event also provides mentors to help the teams develop their ideas throughout the weekend and guide them in ways to sustain their efforts after the event. The weekends culminate with presentations before a judges' panel of entrepreneurial leaders, providing an opportunity for teams to receive critical feedback and perfect their models.

Hypercube will join forces with the Catalyst hub network and Mercy Corps to organize the event, with sponsorship from local and global tech companies. We actively promote it among university students and the broader community in order to attract participants with tech and business skills.

Hypercube Hub is an innovation hub in Harare that is dedicated to fostering the creation of innovative technology for the sustainable growth and development of Zimbabwe. Hypercube's aim is to promote the use of digital technology in all sectors of the Zimbabwean economy by building capacity through training, networking and entrepreneurial support. We also aim to contribute to gender equality, and social development through their initiatives.

Catalyst is a joint initiative of six main innovation hubs in Zimbabwe, including Hypercube. Its goal is to help build a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem that drives sustainable local innovation through partnerships and collaboration.

Mercy Corps is a non-profit organization that strives to catalyze community-led and market-driven solutions to economic development issues. Recognizing their common geographies and mission-related goals, Startup Weekend and Mercy Corps officially joined forces in May 2012 to develop events globally to address youth unemployment and challenges to economic development. To date the organizations have co-hosted events in Zimbabwe, Iraq, Palestine, Portland and Haiti, with future events planned for Egypt, Libya and China.