



Igniting Partnerships

Silicon Savannah

Discovery mission of the Kenyan startup ecosystem

20 - 24 March 2018



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Foreword by Minister Alexander De Croo



It is my pleasure to attend the Silicon Savannah Mission and it is exciting to see people from different backgrounds sharing the same purpose and mission to make things better. Entrepreneurs immediately see solutions to problems. To experience that vibe, both with Belgian and Kenyan entrepreneurs, is very motivating. The energy, the drive for purpose and the results I've experienced in this type of group are truly inspiring.

There is an African proverb that says 'If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.' This also applies to development. Only when achieved by sharing knowledge and experiences development will be sustainable. When one partner is confronted with a problem, another partner comes up with a solution.

I am sincerely looking forward to connecting people from Belgium and Kenya who share this mindset. I am confident that great ideas and projects will emerge.

Alexander De Croo
Deputy Prime Minister



Introduction

Dear participants,

We thank you again for your participation in the recent Silicon Savannah mission to Kenya.

While we are only a few weeks later, we continue to receive updates, appreciation, thoughts and further reflections from many involved stakeholders.

Under the leadership of Minister Alexander De Croo, as Belgian pioneers, you have engaged with the vibrant startup ecosystem in Nairobi. It is clear that we have touched the essence of the future of Development Cooperation 2.0.

The **'tech for development'**-space has unveiled different facets where impact should be equitably sought and realized on the level of:

- Poverty alleviation by bringing technology enabled solutions to the market in an innovative go-to-market approach that takes into account all challenges at the base of the pyramid. In particular how you can be client and customer centric, dealing with a potential of hundreds of millions new 'clients' for basic goods and services in the field of education, fintech, agriculture, cleantech, livelihood & household efficiency and entrepreneurship.
- Seeing Africa as a continent of opportunities, partnerships and impact creation rather than a continent of needy and poor people. This trip was a

unique opportunity for overseas - and in particular Belgian - tech entrepreneurs to change their mentality in that regard, or reconfirm what they already knew.

- Engaging with NGO's since social impact can only be successful if it's done in synergy and partnership with governmental actors, the private sector and the non-profit sector. NGO's are key in helping to create a level playing field in developing countries, a level playing field were basic needs of security, education for all, democracy and healthcare need to be addressed so that (social) entrepreneurs can build on those fundamental and key society strengths.

Numerous press articles in major Belgian and African media have created awareness about our Silicon Savannah mission and about **"Digital for Development"**.

Let's use this momentum and build further... We can only conclude by thanking all involved in having made this mission a real success. In particular a huge thank you to Frederik, Julie, and Inge for having organized this mission. And big thanks also to all our Belgian participants, to the Kenyans involved, the people from the Belgian Embassy and to all our hosts during this extraordinary week!

Karen Boers

Co-founder & Managing Director Startups.be

Olivier Vanden Eynde

Founder & Managing Director Close the Gap

21 March 2018

M-KOPA

The very first visit took the participants to M-KOPA, Kenya's solar energy scale-up, which is an important Safaricom-partner. During the visit, participants discussed industry challenges in fintech, agritech and cleantech, and the respective solutions Safaricom and M-KOPA have to offer in those fields.

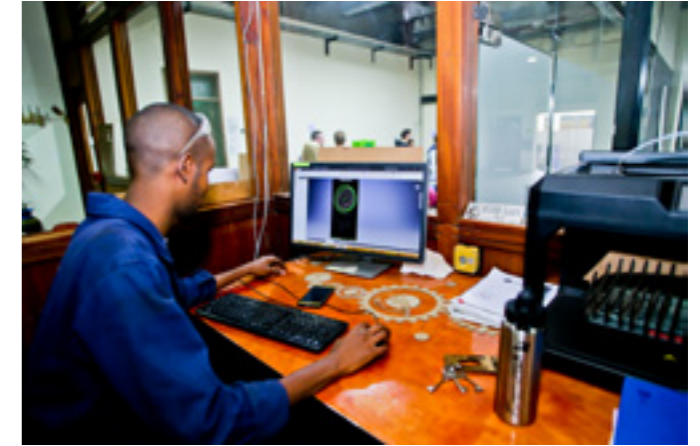




21 March 2018

Gearbox

After lunch, the group visited the Gearbox makerspace. In today's Kenya, the greatest challenges require hardware-based solutions, but building hardware locally is very difficult. Kenya's designers, engineers, and entrepreneurs need affordable access to quality tools, and an ecosystem of support to provide an on-ramp to manufacturing. The participants of the mission learn that Gearbox helps build this ecosystem. Gearbox also gives trainings in design, prototyping, and manufacturing, along with low-cost access to world class facilities. After an introduction to this initiative, the group received a guided tour through the makerspace. Afterwards, they attended number of interesting presentations from different startups in the Gearbox ecosystem.







21 March 2018

Belgian Embassy Residence

In the evening, a visit was planned to the Belgian Embassy. Here, D4D-Be initiator Minister De Croo, Ambassador Nicolas Nihon, Close the Gap Olivier Vanden Eynde and Karen Boers from Startups.be, gave inspiring speeches, which kicked-off of a truly intercultural networking evening between startups and local industry at the Belgian Ambassador's Residence.





22 March 2018

Mettā

In the morning, the group visited Mettā, where they attended a presentation of the Kenyan tech landscape. After an entertaining intro by Kenyan Minister of ICT and Belgian Minister De Croo, the group heard more from Kenyan and Belgian players such as KenInvest, Overview, Ewala, Elewa, Kytabu, and Right Here.





22 March 2018

Nailab



After lunch, the participants were welcomed at Nailab, an incubator hub. There, co-creation workshops were set up with a mix of Belgian and Kenyan startups, which were linked together by industry. The different groups co-created exciting business ideas and discussed opportunities to collaborate. In the evening, a Belgian Meetup with pizza and beers at Nailab was an amazing end of this second day on the mission.







23 March 2018

Andela

The first visit of the day was Andela, which is Africa's most renowned startup that received funding from the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative. Andela is an example of an investment in Africa's best talent to integrate them in top tech companies.





23 March 2018

Right Here

In the afternoon, the group attended an investor session at Right Here offices for an overview of the local Venture Capital scene. Some of our Belgian startups also pitched for a jury composed of investors. For those leaving that evening, a goodbye dinner was organised.





24 March 2018

WEEE Recycle Centre

The participants that stayed for an additional day visited the WEEE Recycle Centre on Saturday morning. This Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Centre is supported by WorldLoop and Close the Gap. During that occasion, the 6th digitruck, a mobile IT class, was inaugurated.







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About D4D-be Platform, Close the Gap & Startups.be

Summary:

First of its kind Belgian Digital for Development platform, initiated by the Belgian Development cooperation (DGD), launched in September 2017, and coordinated by Agoria and Close the Gap.

Its focus is to bring all actors of development together by creating and facilitating an eco-system for all stakeholders, existing projects and opportunities using digital in development.

Ultimate goal is to build a bridge between the Belgian private sector and the development sector in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals and create new partnerships.

Objectives: “Inform, Inspire & Partner”

Timing: September 1, 2017 until February 28, 2019

Target: Potential partners interested in D4D such as government and nongovernmental actors, companies from the private sector, academia and research groups, informal groups or networks

Visit **Kindling.be** or contact us if interested in a co-creation session

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Close the Gap is an international non-profit organization that aims to bridge the digital divide by offering high-quality, pre-owned computers donated by large-and medium-sized corporations or public organizations to educational, medical, entrepreneurial and social projects in developing and emerging countries. Close the Gap also powers Worldloop (sustainable e-waste recycling), the Leap2 program (supporting entrepreneurship and innovation), and the Digital for Development platform, all contributing to creating impact in Africa and other developing countries.

www.close-the-gap.org

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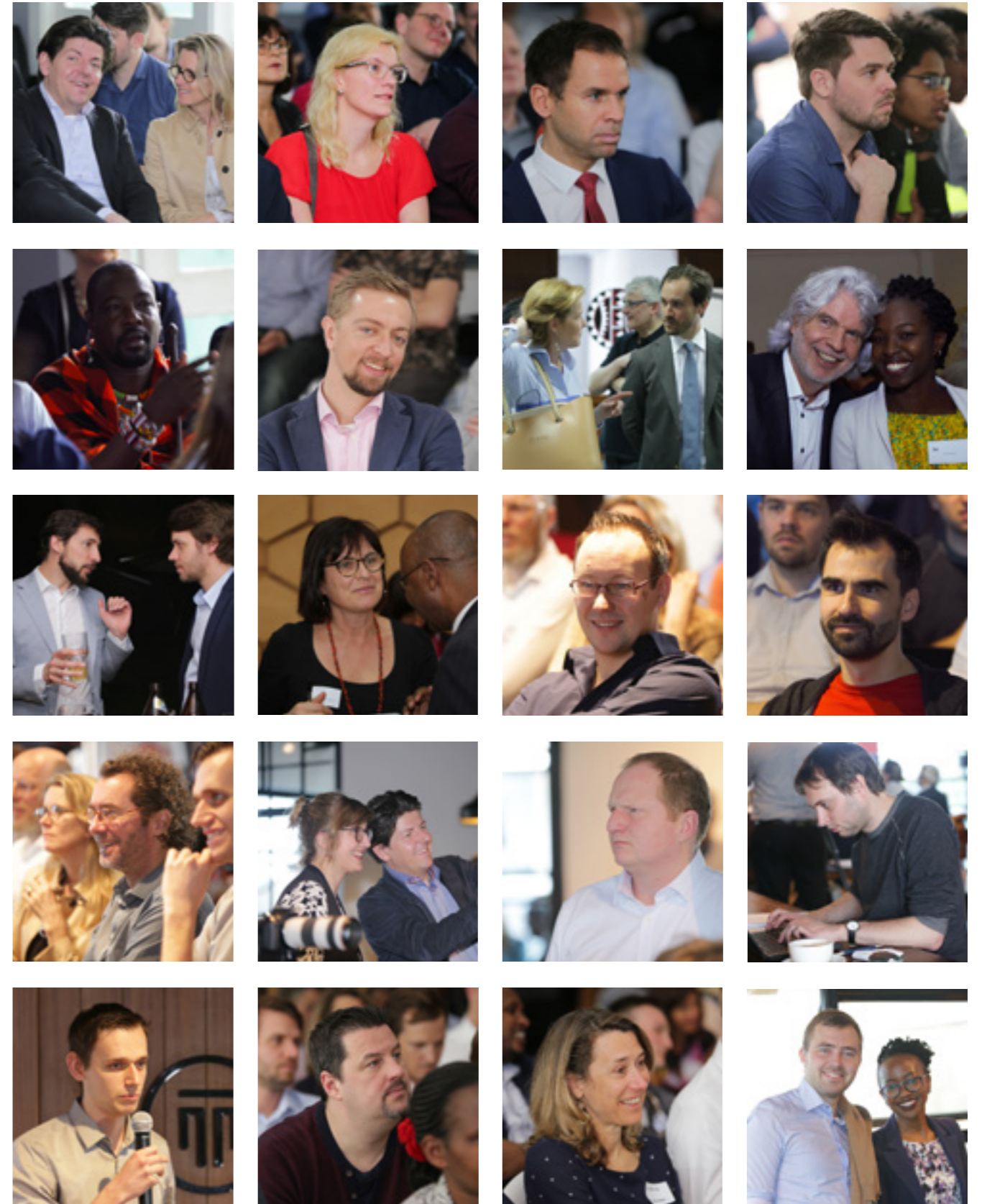
Startups.be is the one-stop-shop for Belgian tech entrepreneurship. We partner with startups to achieve their global ambition, we facilitate joint innovation with business partners worldwide, and we are the independent reference center of excellence in the Belgian startup ecosystem.

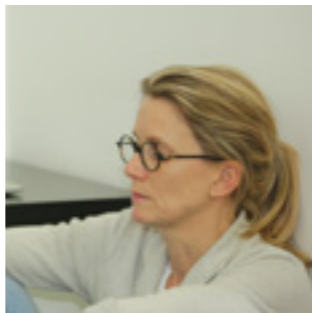
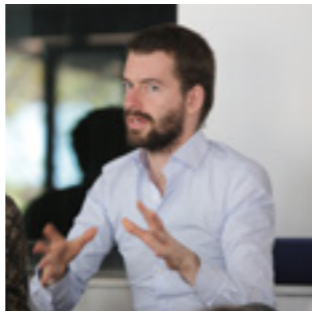
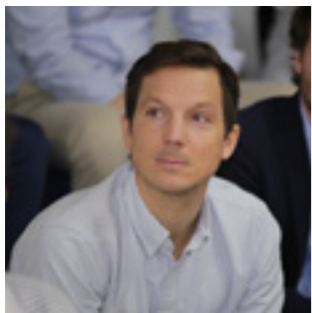
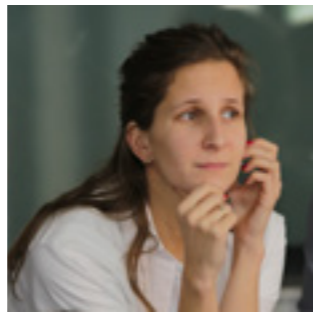
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Snapshots









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