

East Africa Digital Entrepreneurship Ecosystem in Higher Education

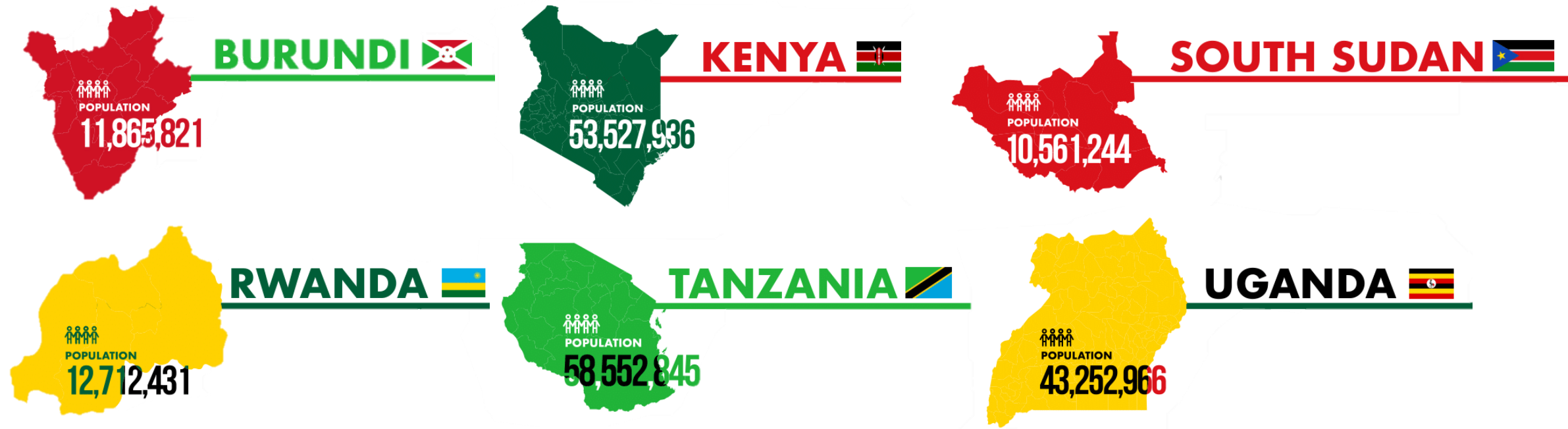
- summary of study results



Implemented by:



The countries covered in this study



Equal emphasis was given to all countries.



The participants of the study

Universities

Students, Lecturers, Administrators, ...

Companies

Start-ups, Corporate employees, Free-lancers, ...

Hubs

Entrepreneurship support providers, government institutions, think tanks, ...



About the methodology that was used

Desk research

69 sources

Case study analysis

Sangu Delle:
„Making
Futures“

Semi-structured interviews

10 questions,
150 pages of
interviews

Survey

11 questions,
3465 data
points

Which recommendations involve you?

Hubs



Academia



Private
Sector



Public
Sector



Media



Six central narratives emerged from the research.

Tech is the future

Heros, game changers, women in Tech needed

Universities need to provide relevant skills

Mindset change & putting Africa „on the map“

Social Entrepreneurship & solving problems of the local communities

Local structures and SMEs are relevant

Tech is the future - situation & challenges.

Big exits starting to happen (Paystack, Beyonic).

Big Tech coming to Africa (Twitter, Facebook, Alibaba, Microsoft, Google, and IBM with visits/programs/offices).

Interviewees said: data science/digital marketing/
programming/AI/robotics/IoT **skills lack – also from curricula.**

59% of survey participants were unsure or said that a student **cannot learn the skills to start a software company at campus.**

Tech is the future – recommendations.

Create and fund digital entrepreneurship **competitions and challenges.**

Provide **knowledge and skills students lack most:**
Digital business models / Technical skills to build digital products / market knowledge for digital products

Integrate **varied and tailor-made internships** – into the curricula.



Heros, game changers, women in Tech needed - situation & challenges.

Role models awake the narrative that something is possible.
This is particularly important for digital women entrepreneurs.

The heroine and hero going **through challenges and disaster** to finally **find their glorious destiny** is a relevant narrative in literature such as case studies about African Entrepreneurs in Sangu Delle's „Making Futures“.

Heros, game changers, women in Tech needed - recommendations.

Create and fund a platform at university to **showcase results** of digital entrepreneurship at university.



Create and fund “**women only**” networks, meetings, competitions, and institutions. Support equal pay and equal rights initiatives in tech and entrepreneurship.



Heros, game changers, women in Tech needed - recommendations.

Connect to various **media**, disseminate relevant **stories**, create campus radios, podcasts, YouTube channels, etc.



Award titles and honours, competition prices, certificates of training and micro learning.



Universities need to provide relevant skills - situation & challenges.

Theory, focus on exams and papers, and traditional teaching are mentioned as a challenge while practical learning is missing.

71% of survey participants **do not believe that universities provide the skills** needed to start an enterprise.

53% of survey participants believe that **lecturers lack the skills to support students in enterprise creation** (Companies: **65%**).

Universities need to provide relevant skills - recommendations.

Use the **top ranked methods for entrepreneurship education**: Project-based teaching (set up enterprise)/
Integrate Hubs/ Practice-oriented teaching



Use the **top ranked interventions to impact the success of student ventures**: Curriculum-integration of entrepreneurship trainings/ Mentorship through successful local entrepreneurs/ Practical coding courses



Universities need to provide relevant skills - recommendations.

Tandem-teaching modules - lecturer with entrepreneur.



Integrate **experiential learning** in curricula; invite entrepreneurs; field trips to start-ups, SMEs, corporates.



Integrate **local hubs** into the entrepreneurship education; project-based and case-study training.



Universities need to provide relevant skills - recommendations.

Interdisciplinary courses on (digital) entrepreneurship at university - actively involve relevant departments.

Academia



Create and fund a **student-run platform** for the student body at university (local, national, regional), as well as student clubs and community for entrepreneurship.



Mindset change & putting Africa on the map - situation & challenges.

Corporate and Government jobs are scarce and still sought. Entrepreneurship must become a viable career option.

Mindset of universities & university leadership does not yet embrace Tech, digital, or IT as strategic core functions.

„People have to believe in themselves and in the little they have“ - Dr. John Olukuru, Strathmore University

Mindset change & putting Africa on the map - recommendations.

Create **entrepreneurial mindset** courses (curious, problem-focused, business-oriented, user-centred,).



Integrate alumni into entrepreneurship **teaching & networks**, offer lifelong learning opportunities.



Allow for a **culture of open feedback** and failures.



Social Entrepreneurship and solving problems of the local communities

- situation & challenges.

The narrative of solving problems for the community, the society, the country is big especially among entrepreneurs, students, and hubs.

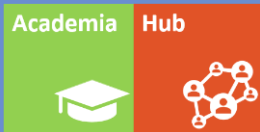
Social Entrepreneurship and solving problems of the local communities

- recommendations.

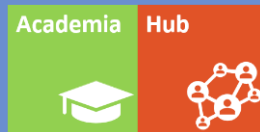
Create **content** in **local languages** and disseminate the content online and to rural communities.



Promote **social entrepreneurship** models, ideas and successes and integrate them into curricula.



Create **summer schools** taking place in **rural areas** as a starter for interest in digital entrepreneurship.



Local structures and SME's are relevant - situation & challenges.

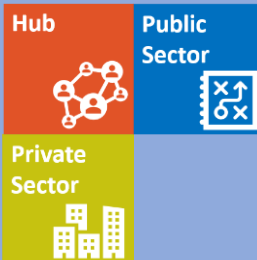
Role models awake the narrative that something is possible. This is particularly important for digital women entrepreneurs.

Local structures and SMEs are relevant - recommendations.

Integrate and showcase players, stakeholders, and offers along an “**entrepreneurial journey**” to connect universities/students with relevant stakeholders.



Create and run a network that relies on **local partners**; connect to hubs and incubators; integrate finance institutions and business angels.



General recommendations

Create and sustain an online “**entrepreneurship support desk**” with Curricula, workshop & training templates, links of hubs, profiles of mentors, investor databases, etc.



Create a semester-wise **evaluation system** for entrepreneurship education in the EAC that is independent, transparent and neutral.



General recommendations cont'd

Create **specific cooperation systems among universities** in the EAC and nationally with regard to their specific profiles and strengths:
University-University collaboration.



Take note: The university/company divide

Can students obtain all relevant skills to start an enterprise at university?

Companies: 84% disagreement.

Universities: 50% disagreement.

Do lecturers have the skills to support successful student venture creation?

Companies: 65% disagreement.

Universities: 35% disagreement.

Can universities guide students towards viable digital business models?

Companies: 58% disagreement.

Universities: 34% disagreement.

Women entrepreneurs

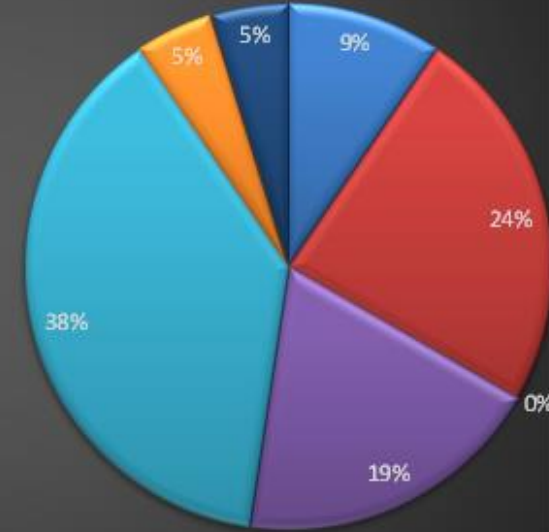
The study found that women want deep individual support. Also, women-only activities are a way to break the pattern of women being disadvantaged in entrepreneurship.

Answers given by women

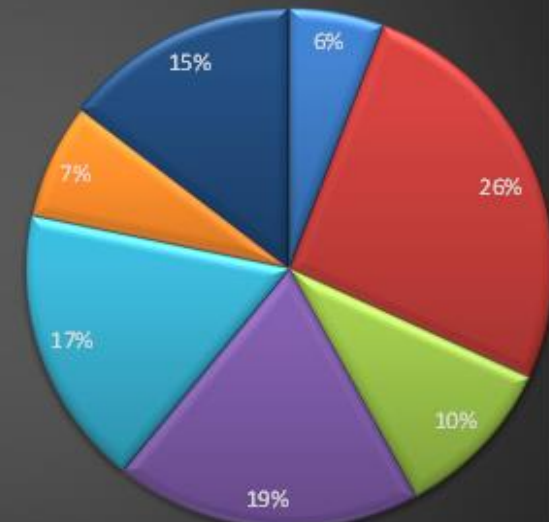
Answers given by men

The top answers from the survey.
Which is the most impactful intervention?

- Financing options for student ventures
- Curriculum-integrated entrepreneurship trainings
- Extra-curricular entrepreneurship trainings
- Practical coding courses
- Mentorship options by successful local entrepreneurs
- Well-equipped computer labs
- Free fast internet on campus



- Financing options for student ventures
- Curriculum-integrated entrepreneurship trainings
- Extra-curricular entrepreneurship trainings
- Practical coding courses
- Mentorship options by successful local entrepreneurs
- Well-equipped computer labs
- Free fast internet on campus



Women entrepreneurs - Be mindful about perceptions.

We asked: Do women face a harder time starting an enterprise?

Find the answers on the right.

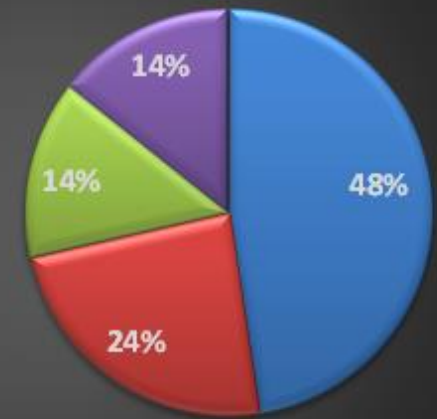
Women feel it is true.

Men & Universities much less so.

An ecosystem not acknowledging this bigger hardship as much will be less supportive.

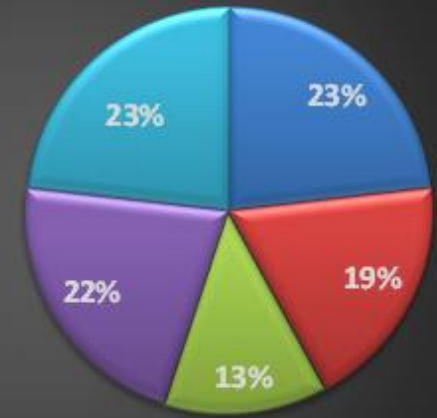
Women's answers.

- I completely agree
- I rather agree
- I slightly disagree
- I do not agree
- I am not sure



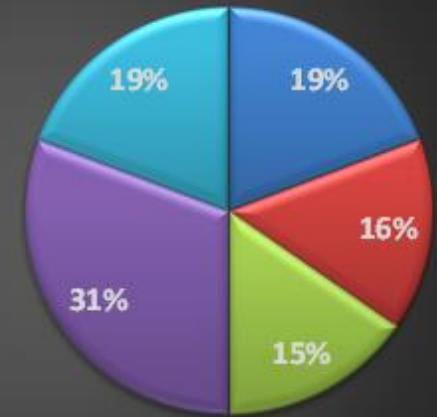
Men's answers.

- I completely agree
- I rather agree
- I slightly disagree
- I do not agree
- I am not sure



University's answers.

- I completely agree
- I rather agree
- I slightly disagree
- I do not agree
- I am not sure





**For questions about the study,
contact CENIT or the consultants:**



Simon Hochstein
Simon.Hochstein@giz.de



Matthias Möbius
m.moebius@starhubafrica.org



Prof. Ulrich Wünsch
wuensch@sabaa.education