Workshop on the ecosystemic approach in Digital Trade in Rwanda

26th May 2022

Digital Africa is organizing a workshop on **May 26th 2022 in Kigali**. Our mission is to equip African tech entrepreneurs in their capabilities to design and scale digital innovations for the real economy. This event is part of our participation to the European project AEDIB|NET, which aims to strengthen the African digital innovation ecosystem and create bridges of cooperation between Africa and Europe.

The objective of this event is to provide a **methodology of the ecosystem approach in the field of digital trade in Rwanda**: its key factors of success and its challenges, by taking example on a use case (DOORS- Digital innovation for SMEs). The guests are **about twenty** representatives of the diversity of stakeholders of the ecosystem - startups, universities, investors, institutionals.

The theme

The prospects for digitally enabled trade in Africa can be of particular benefit to micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), for more than 80 percent of enterprises in Africa, helping them connect with purchasers abroad and provide the supportive services to facilitate their exports, including simplified payments and logistics. Digital platforms alone, on which most B2B, B2G and B2C digitally enabled trade is presently carried out, have improved microbusinesses and SMEs' access to information, such as markets, quality requirements and certifying bodies, suppliers, distributors and buyers; access to electronic payment instruments to conduct financial transactions; and access to transportation and logistics. Digital trade can also be a tool for boosting intra-regional trade by connecting buyers and sellers.

The use-case: DOORS - Digital innovation for SMEs

The aim of this digital innovation hub (DIH) is to **increase technology adoption and digitization efforts of Rwandan SMEs**. In Rwanda, the adoption of digital tools and technology uptake is low among the SMEs. SME entrepreneurs lack basic digital skills and the knowledge of how technology and digitalization can bring in business benefits. The consortium will **develop and deliver a series of activities** that will,

- Create awareness of digital technologies
- Improve digital entrepreneurship skills
- Demonstrate technology in action
- Help SMEs integrate technology in business
- Advice on start-ups and setting up
- Exports and internationalization.
- Running kick-starter, hackathon activities
- Providing matchmaking services

It is aimed that the DIH and its activities will help in **capability and capacity building towards digitization and develop an entrepreneurial ecosystem** that will empower Rwandan SMEs to use **digital tools and technologies** to create economic and social value.

Consortium members:
- Coventry University Africa Hub,
- 250 Startups Incubator

Key objectives of the hub:
- Develop and nurture relationships to improve digitalization in Rwandan SMEs
- Facilitate the promotion of digitalization of projects, startups and an ecosystem that include the active participation of SMEs in Rwanda
- Enriching the innovation ecosystem by focusing on uptakes of digital technologies and derive benefits from the use of them

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Program of the day (8.30am-2.30pm)

Welcoming of the participants (8.30am)

Introduction (9am-10am) *(All participants)*
Presentation of the ecosystemic approach and the project of the hub (10am-10.30am)
A powerful approach with benefits (Digital Africa)
Use case: what is DOORS project and its impact (DOORS)

10.30am-11am - Networking coffee

Building up an ecosystem approach -"allies strategy" design (11am-12.30am) *(All participants)*
Who is involved, how, when? Pedagogical tool.
Wrap up of the day (12.30am-1pm) *(Digital Africa)*
Concrete next steps

Networking lunch (1pm- 2.30pm)

Key objective 1: Understand how to contribute to a common project and how to encourage the creation of future projects around Digital Trade

Key output 1: Identify together the key success factors, risks and challenges of an ecosystem approach

Key objective 2: Connect actors working on the same themes to create synergies

Key output 2: To have a mapping of the partners of the Digital Trade ecosystem in Rwanda

Digital Africa

Digital Africa is an initiative aimed to **equip African tech entrepreneurs with capabilities to design and scale-up ground-breaking innovations for the real economy.** We bring together partners of all nationalities - startups, incubators, institutional financiers, venture capitalists, technology clusters, academia - and all committed to African digital entrepreneurs
Our approach is informed on a clear diagnosis of the needs of entrepreneurs which is coming directly from the field to structure a set of programs around three main areas of focus :
- Equipping High Impact Digitally Enabled Start-up
- Sourcing African & Global Finance to Scale-Up Projects
- Developing Research & Policy recommendations in support of Made In Africa Digital Innovations

Le projet AEDIB|NET

African European Digital Innovation Bridge (AEDIB|NET) is a project funded by the European Commission under Horizon 2020 that brings together the expertise of 13 consortium members to **strengthen the African innovation ecosystem, and create bridges of cooperation between Africa and Europe**. AEDIB|NET will set up Digital Innovation Hubs in the following 4 areas: Climate Smart Agriculture, Smart Cities, Digital Trade and Clean Tech.
As part of this project, Digital Africa is preparing a white paper to identify **the gaps, needs and opportunities of the innovation ecosystem in Africa** in the above mentioned areas. To do this, and after a first phase of mapping opportunities and needs in 12 African countries, the second phase of **deep dive in 3 countrie**s involves the organization of focus groups, involving different stakeholders.