

HACK N TALK REPORT

Date: **4-5 June, 2022**

Location: **Muni NTC-ARUA**

Participants: **80**

Area of focus/themes: *Smart Cities, Climate Smart Agriculture, clean tech and Digital Trade.*



Photo1: Distribution of posters in Bidibidi refugee settlement in Yumbe District-Uganda

1. Introduction:

Hack N Talk was sponsored by Horizon 2020, implemented by Enabel and it was based on a human centred design and design thinking methodology. It was a 2-days hackathon (48 hours), starting with ideation sessions, followed by developing business case and prototyping. Co-creation formed a central part of the methodology and the target groups are people from different fields – IT, creative industry and government officials along the marginalized groups of refugee women and youths who successfully participated in the identification of the challenges. Experts and coaches mentored and at the same time challenge the teams. At the end of the second day, 5 winning teams were awarded by a jury and they will have the opportunity to further implement their work in the summer school (deeper understanding and digital skills learning) and/ or work with hubs in piloting the solutions.

1.1. Objectives of the hackathon

1. To assess the needs and skills of marginalized groups (women and youths).
2. To foster co-creation with industry actors in designing digital solutions for marginalized groups.
3. Prepare the marginalized groups for the Digital Entrepreneurship Skills summer school.

2.0 Pre-event activities:

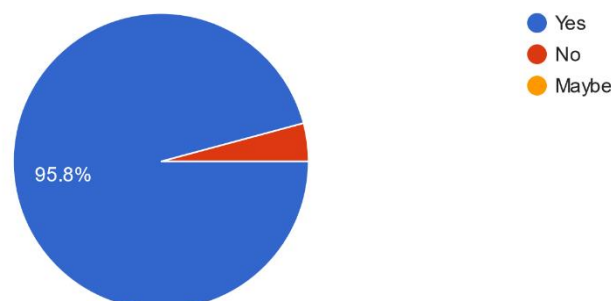
Prior to the event, an online campaign was run on the project website, Enabel in Uganda social media (twitter) and the Embassy of Belgium Facebook page. The campaign ran for four weeks. Staff members shared in different WhatsApp groups in a bid to sensitize the masses about the event.

Two weeks to the deadline of applications, the campaign was further reinforced with distribution of over 300 hard paper posters in different camps and host community districts in West Nile (Arua) region. This was done with the help of partners like World Vision, Norwegian refugee council, and ADRA among others. These posters were targeting VTI, IT experts based in host communities as well as business mentors based in the region. The impact for these posters was evident as the number of applicants shot up massively.

On the eve of the event, the participants were supplied with a pre-event assessment form to gauge their understanding of the hackathon, expectations as well as also create the baseline measure for event assessment. It was evident that participants appreciated the introductory session that was held on the eve of the hackathon and were clear on the roles they were to play in the hackathon. Below are the graphic representations from the pre-event survey.

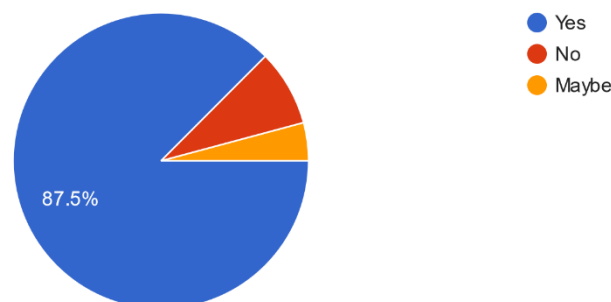
Was the introductory session helpful to you?

24 responses



Are you clear on the role you will play in your team in the hackathon?

24 responses



Participants also shared their expectations on what they hoped to achieve at the end of the 48hr hackathon. Their expectations ranged from; starting a hub for mentoring new entrepreneurs, learn and acquire skills and knowledge to pass on to fellow refugees, create self-employment, winning awards, networking and getting certificates among others. It is from this survey that we tried to fit with in the expectations of participants for the 48hrs of the event. This information was also to be used later in the post event survey.

2.1. Selection and formation of teams:

Upon filling an online application form via google forms, information was gathered about the applicants' profile (area of interest, the nature of applicant as well as their contribution towards the hackathon). It is upon this information that selection of participants was based. A clear rubric for selection has been attached as an annex. Despite having the rubric, the process was also gender sensitive and aimed at inclusion. Women were given priority despite having lower number of female applicants in our pool.

Participants were informed about their success at least 10 days before the hackathon date. This was done in order to give them ample time to prepare for the event as well us to enable the organizers to replace whoever could not make it to the event.

In order to make the process easy and fast for the organizers (Enabel), a “**confirmation**” google form was shared among the participants asking about vital information like Mobile money line and names in which the line is registered, their preferred place of residence, allergies with some foods and any other information they wanted the organizers to know beforehand. This

information was to be later used in re-imbursement of transport and accommodation as well as booking for accommodation and meals.

Teams were formed randomly but most importantly the teams were balanced in terms of capacity. Each team member had at least an IT expert, a mentor, moderator, DIH expert and at least a challenge owner. In some cases, there were two challenge owners in a group but as a rule, group members could **not exceed 6 members**. This was aimed ensuring a cohesive and orderly group during the ideation and cocreation sessions.

The different teams formed were meant to work together for the next 48hrs until the final pitching and awarding hour.

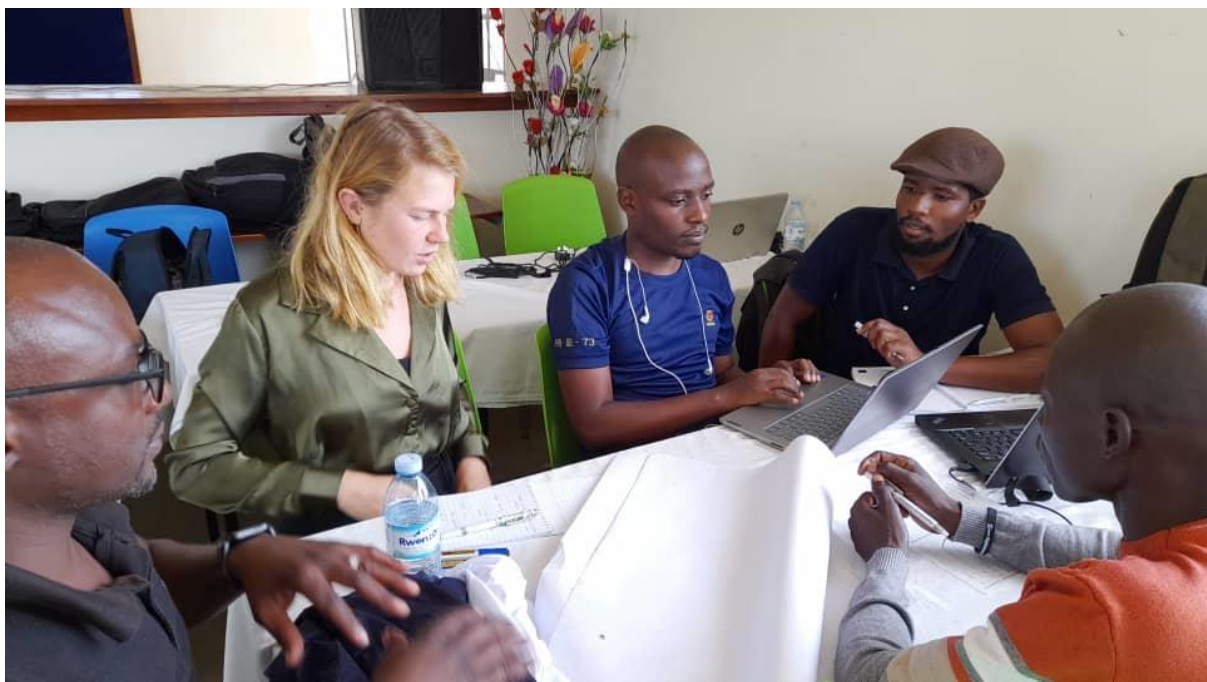


Photo 2: Participants in a group during ideation session- the group comprises of mentor, IT expert, challenge owners, moderator and sector expert.

2.2 Awarding of prizes.



Photo 3. Panel of judges from Enabel, Muni Incubation lab, MTN, AfriLabs and Ministry of ICT

Five teams were awarded with various prizes. The overall winning team had a challenge in smart cities category where they are addressing **Improper disposal electronic equipment that poses threats to public health and eco-system**. They proposed an integrated e-waste management solution for a sustainable environment at household, public and private institutions in west Nile using efficient Technology. The second runners up were in the smart communities with a social innovation where they are addressing conflicts between refugees and host communities with a Safe Space App. A digital application- Safe Space App (Digital Is The Language We Share) with lessons on conflict on topics of Land, water and other resources, games that can be played between two people and entertainment for both communities. The third group had an Agro-Market USSD Information System that offers on demand Information in Multiple local languages about market, services like financial assistance etc. The fourth was a USSID application that would bring farmers and buyers together to create a sustainable relationship by preventing product theft, price manipulation of their products and disease spread. The fifth group that was awarded was an app(web app and USSD) in digital trade while solving wastage of agricultural produce and it would link farmers with buyers.

Other none winning teams walked away with other general prizes like pens, gift bags and pens and notebooks.

Attendance

<i>Category</i>	<i>No. of Male</i>	<i>No. Females</i>
Challenge owners	20	7
Mentors	9	6
IT experts	13	4
Academia & DIHs	12	8
Total	54	25

Prototypes/ideas co-created

<i>Category</i>	<i>No. of innovations</i>
Climate Smart Agriculture	3
Smart cities	2
Digital trade	7
Clean tech	2

3.0 Achievements

The biggest achievement of the event was that we managed to impact participants from the intended target groups i.e. Vulnerable and marginalized women and youths. The participants (challenge owners and sector experts) were mainly from the settlements and host communities. However, IT experts, moderators and mentors were from all regions of Uganda and Rwanda and Nigeria.

In terms of numbers, the event exceeded the target. Hack N Talk attracted 79 participants exceeding 70 the official target. This can be attributed to proper and clear mobilization strategy put in place as well as working through influential partners like NRC and World Vision.

Also, the co-creation sessions resulted into 14 scalable digital innovations from all the four categories in the call (Climate smart Agriculture, Digital trade, Smart cities and clean tech). Five(5) out of the fourteen (14) groups were awarded different prizes ranging from Tablet to flash disks(each team member was awarded)

4.0. Challenges:

The event was largely successful apart from imbalance in gender because most women turned down the offer (they could not be away from home for 3days). This is the feedback that we got from the individuals that turned down the invite. A more flexible schedule will be designed for such women having understood their challenges this time.

There was also a challenge of time management among the participants especially on day one. This was due having participants from different locations including Kampala and Soroti cities. This was caused by lack of enough mentors and experts from Arua region and we were forced to increase on the scope to other regions thus experts from outside the target location were considered.

There were also some logistical challenges especially procurement of visibility items and finance where participants experienced reimbursement delays on the last day of the event. Despite early preparations and planning, there were some delays in verification of attendance lists thus delays in reimbursement of funds. This was partly attributed to last minute changes in the mission order and skipping of some details in the justifications. More attention to detail will be paid to the justification next time.

Limited time and budget for sensitization and marketing of the event. Most partners reported that more time(two months) would have been given to participants and their funding organizations to sensitize and market the event if quality applications were to be received from the participants. This statement was validated by the quality of applications that were received. More time and resources should be dedicated to sensitization and marketing next time.

5.0 Lessons learnt.



Photo 4. Group photo with some of the participants

More budget, time and resources should be directed towards capacity building of partners, sensitization and marketing in order to have quality applications for the hackathons. Some applicants lacked in-depth understanding of a hackathon and this could be seen from the quality of applicants.

From the post-hackathon survey, it was clear that pre-event capacity building session was very helpful to the participants especially the first-time participants. According to the survey, all the participants reported to have gained insights from the pre-event capacity building session.

The venue and design of the event should be thoroughly thought through especially where mothers and married women are to participate. A venue close to target women as well as a nonresidential hackathon would be more appealing to the women compared to the 48hr residential one. Several women reported the residential nature of the hackathon being a challenge to them.

6.0 Conclusion.

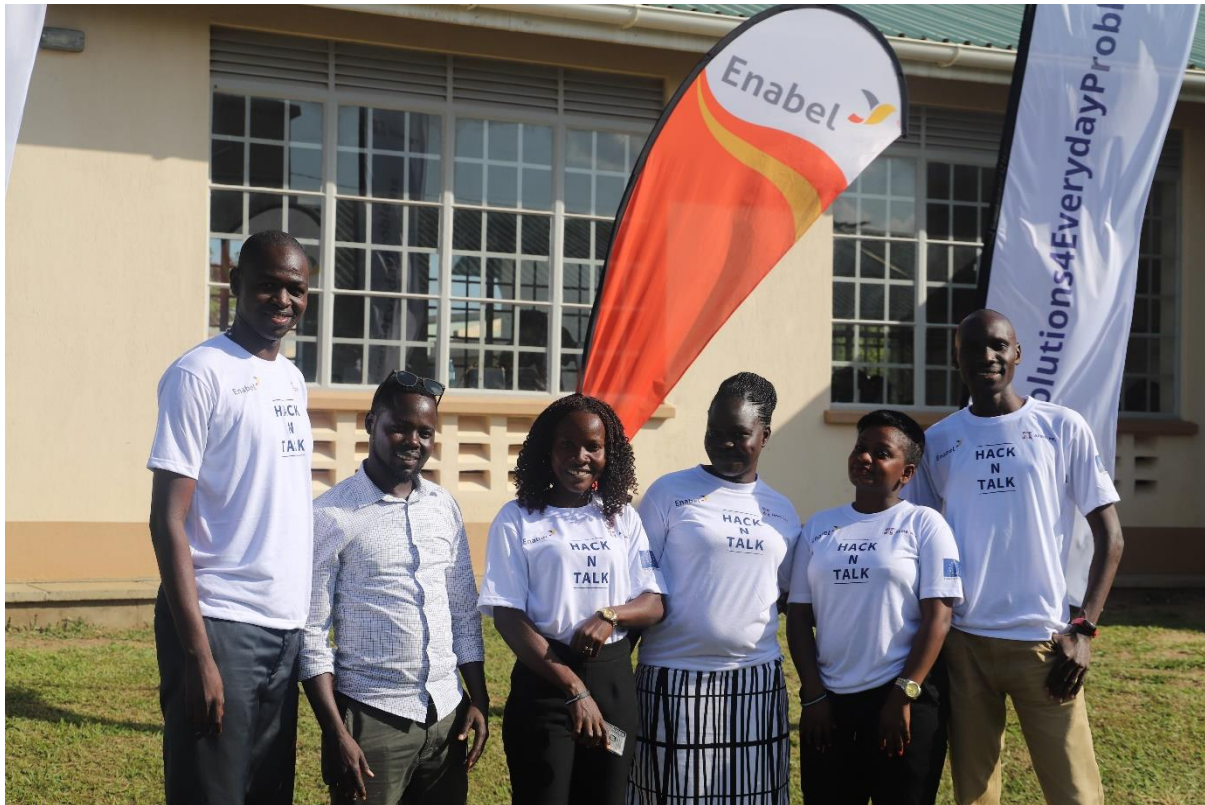
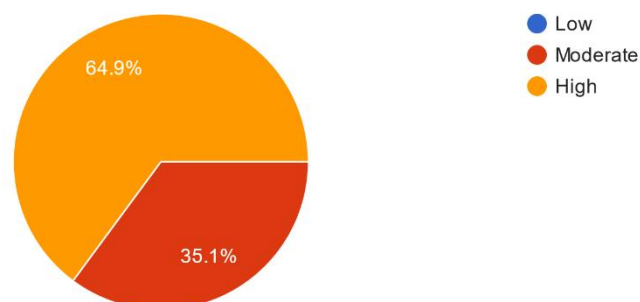


Photo 5. One of the teams during a break

The event was scored largely successful with 65% of the survey participants having been fully satisfied by the hackathon while 35% rated it moderate. No participant rated the event low.

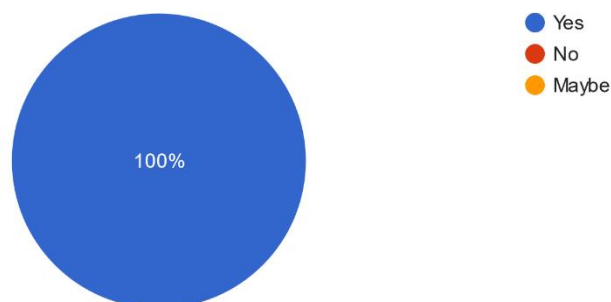
My overall, my satisfaction with this hackathon was:

37 responses



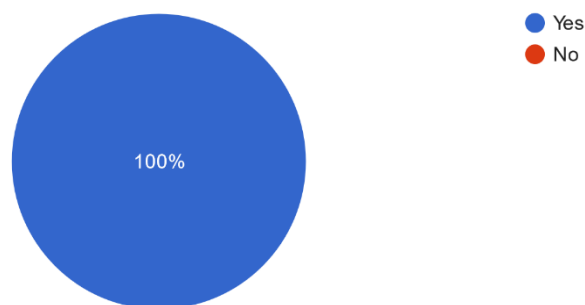
Was the hackathon relevant to you?

37 responses



I benefited meeting by colleagues and co-creating in a multi sectoral context.

37 responses



Pitching came out as the most interesting session of the event and more participants requested for more time during the pitch session in future.

As a follow up and way forward following the event, all the 79 participants (minus staff) will be awarded e-certificates by end of June and at least 35 members from the most successful teams will be invited to attend a 3 weeks summer school by end of August 2022.

Submitted by:

Bwengye Anthony

Intervention officer D4D

References:

1. (pre-hack survey)<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/11Q1H0Nl6HA6I6l7iBdtOCiwKeyQbgKTIKNtWtjRxfu0/edit#responses>
2. (post hack survey)https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1RbwuVQE_seSo9FB91C21Evko0FbdpHlXoVVzPYRtl5Y/edit#responses
3. (Judgement criteria)<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1TsIP0uOeKWnDFECrbleewgzaIKbK8eZ/edit#gid=891722157>
4. (application form)<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1pGq5B2FeHhQedX-pybjxiVOnFyzVCz-Eg3pP-SjC10M/edit>
5. (Innovations/prototypes)https://enabelbe.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/PRJ_BEL_AEDIB_IDEA/Shared%20Documents/AEDIBNET_BEL20008/Uganda/Hackathon/Reporting/Prototypes?csf=1&web=1&e=GkEyzt