



A Project co-funded by
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ECOSYSTEM COMPARISONS, LESSONS, AND INSIGHTS FROM THE REGION

Ethiopian Startup Ecosystem Festival, 2023

Presentation by:



Convened and hosted by:



OVERVIEW

	Ethiopia	Uganda	Kenya
First ESO	2011	2011	2010
Total no. ESOs	102	48	189
No. accelerators	4	5	12
No. incubators	38	16	32
No. hubs + spaces	30	14	72
ESOs outside capital city	25	1	35

Learning and insights

1 Bigger, older ecosystem = later stage + specialisation

ESOs in the capital are advantaged.
Ecosystems need to support inclusivity

2 Coworking spaces grow with local and int. businesses

Unit economics needed to make them accessible to early-stage startups

3 Shift needed from more to better?

Focus to now be on building capacity and resource existing ESOs

4 Growing ecosystems attracts international ESOs

Big international ESOs will not set up unless there is money, small ones will

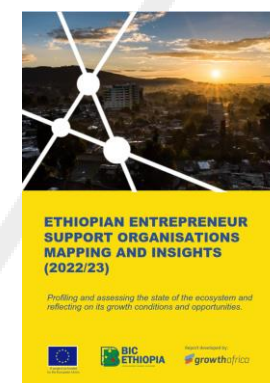
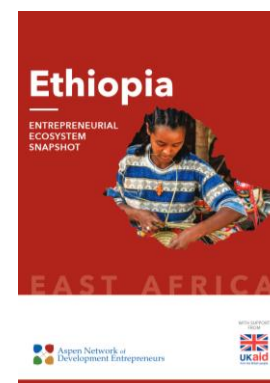
INFORMATION & DATA

1 Little and old research and data. Changing this year?

All / most data collection is done as one-off projects. Minimal primary research.

2 Universities could play a big(ger) role

Logic extension of the many university incubators. Funders can be found.



ECOSYSTEM ASSOCIATIONS

	Ethiopia	Uganda	Kenya	Kenya
Associations	EASE	Startup Uganda	ASSEK	ACIH
Year of establishment	2022	2019	2018	2019
No. full time employees	3	1	6	0
No. parttime employees	0	1	0	0
Running projects	Yes	Yes	Yes	(No)

ASSEK: Association of Startup Enablers of Kenya
 ACIH: Association of Countrywide Innovation Hubs

Learning and insights

1 Capital powerhouse – or countrywide inclusive ecosystem

ESOs in the capital are advantaged.
Ecosystems need support inclusivity

2 Project strategy, governance and transparency

Develop adequate policies for projects and organizational capacity.

3 Running projects for the ecosystem or for financial sustainability

Mission drift. Keep asking why you do projects, do they serve you directly?

4 Projects for the association or its members

Define what projects to take in, what role and what role for the members

ECOSYSTEM ASSOCIATIONS

	Ethiopia	Uganda	Kenya	Kenya
Associations	EASE	Startup Uganda	ASSEK	ACIH
Governance	Board of 5	Board of 4	Board of 11	Board of 7
Who are members	Professionals (individuals) from ESOs, startups and investors	ESOs	ESOs, associate members are other stakeholders	ESOs outside of Nairobi, associate members are ESOs from Nairobi and other stakeholders
No. members	17	23	89	38
No. associate members	0	0	0	11

Learning and insights

1 Big board vs. small(er) working groups

Set up small(er) dedicated teams to work and focus on key topics

2 Broad membership – or associate members

Include non-core stakeholders but through associate membership

3 Organic or strategic membership growth

Run an annual membership recruitment drive supported by the members

Learning and insights

1 Very hierarchical organisational structures

Need to look at how to create a broader engagement and ownership

2 No leadership development, succession planning

Strategy needed to continuously develop new talent and leadership

3 Reinforce existing power structure or democratise

Develop the structures to ensure that the association democratise resources

4 Associations are reflections of their community

Build and nurture community before activities

ECOSYSTEM EVENTS

	Ethiopia	Uganda	Kenya	
Annual key event(s)	Enkopa	Uganda Startup Week	Kenya Innovation Week	
Key event(s) by associations	TBD	Uganda Startup Week	ASSEK: None	ACIH: Regional 1-4 days conferences
Other event(s) by associations	TBD	Project based trainings	ASSEK: Project based trainings	ACIH: Project based trainings
Capacity dev. trainings	TBD	Ad hoc	Ad hoc	Ad hoc

Learning and insights

1 Our success relies on our capacity, yet it is unplanned

Need to place capacity building at the heart of our ecosystem development

2 One size doesn't fit all. Train at different levels

Capacity building needs to address the needs of new and experienced team members

3 Need events to celebrate and showcase, don't need to own them

Collaborate or develop the anchor events which communicates the ecosystem

4 Regional events feeding into a national key event

Address local needs and realities with regional collaborative events culminating with a national event

ECOSYSTEM ASSOCIATIONS

	Ethiopia	Uganda	Kenya	Kenya
Associations	EASE	Startup Uganda	ASSEK	ACIH
Estm. membership coverage	7 – 15%	45%	50%	93%
Annual membership fee in USD	0	265, 530 or 800	70 (+ joining fee 15)	70 (+ joining fee 15)
Annual budget	55,000	200,000	200,000	10,000
Key funders	GIZ	GIZ	GIZ, FCDO	GIZ

Learning and insights

1 Members equal voice and funding

ESOs in the capital are advantaged.
Ecosystems need support inclusivity

2 Fees for commitment, contributing to sustainability

Membership fees have signal value,
paying members are invested

3 Budget and funding are not indicators of success

Supporting members can be
achieved with little funding.

4 Build and diversify revenue sources

Define what projects to take in, what
role and what role for the members

Ecosystems are collaboration

Collaboration requires trust

Trust is built by individuals – by us

We trust people, we know

Who will you get to know today?