



PRESS RELEASE

ETHIOPIAN STARTUP ECOSYSTEM FESTIVAL

Exploring the way ahead for Ethiopia's startup ecosystem with leading national and international players and organizations

For two days, startups, experienced entrepreneurs, incubators, accelerators and investors gathered at a conference called "Ethiopian Startup Ecosystem Festival" in Legetafo City. The conference brought together stakeholders in the Ethiopian startup ecosystem to discuss growth opportunities in the startup scene. The event culminated with a spectacular fashion show featuring Ethiopia's creative talent from startups and fashion designers.

The Startup Ecosystem Festival was co-organized by the Private Sector Development in Ethiopia (PSD-E) project, implemented by GIZ on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and BIC ETHIOPIA, a project co-funded by the European Union. Both projects support the strengthening of the Ethiopian startup ecosystem. The conference was hosted at African Mosaïque, a leading incubator supporting startups in Ethiopia's creative fashion industry.

The first day of the conference was more technical and included startup pitches, focused on successes and lessons learned within the ecosystem, and opened the discussion on how to ensure startups have access to organizations that can support them in further development stages to ensure the sector reaches its desired growth potential.

Co-organizer of the event, Aregash Asfaw, GIZ Cluster Coordinator of the Economic Transformation Cluster and Project Manager of the PSD-E project, said of the first day:

"I am happy to see many stakeholders here today with which we have been working closely over the last two years to strengthen the Ethiopian start-up ecosystem. Today has shown that our support was successful – be it the implementation of investment clinic workshops that have brought together a key group of investors, to supporting the establishment of the 'Ethiopian Association for Startup Ecosystem' (EASE) that strengthens partnerships among ecosystem players or working one-on-one with incubators across the country to strengthen their business models and service delivery for startups. We are also taking the ideas and learnings from today into our planning of future support measures that shall ensure that we keep building an ecosystem that will enable startups to thrive."

The second day of the conference was attended by a larger audience, including government representatives, NGOs, and investors in addition to startup ecosystem stakeholders. The day focused on lessons learned from other programs and included a discussion on future actions and commitments needed for existing startups and Small and Growing Businesses (SGBs) to continue growing. In the afternoon, the conference concluded with an exhibition and fashion show where startups from across the country were invited to showcase their work.



Co-organizer of the event, Oliver Petzoldt, Team Leader, BIC ETHIOPIA said about the conference:

"This conference was a good opportunity to look back at what we have achieved but also a reminder that there are concrete next steps we need to take to help the startup ecosystem to grow further. Our attendees with their expertise came up with excellent ideas of how to make that happen. It was wonderful to do this in an atmosphere of positivity and in the presence of all the creative talents from the startups and designers which put on a wonderful show today."

Host of the event Anna Gatenah, CEO of African Mosaique, says about the conference:

"Hosting an event that focuses on supporting and strengthening the startup ecosystem including incubator programs and that brings together different sectors in Ethiopia is a great way to foster collaboration and innovation. It also helps to raise awareness of the important role that incubators and startups play in supporting the growth of Ethiopian businesses. African Mosaique is honored to be part of this important platform that helps to connect the various programs with each other and with other stakeholders in the Ethiopian entrepreneurial ecosystem."

Boiler Plate GIZ

German Development Cooperation has been supporting the Ethiopian Government's initiatives for more than 50 years. We work with our partners to support their socio-economic reform agenda aimed at reducing poverty, promoting economic growth and creating jobs. Our work contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and is implemented in line with the Ethiopian-German cooperation agreements.

The federally owned **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH** supports the German Government - especially the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) - and many public and private sector clients in achieving their international cooperation goals for sustainable development. To this end, GIZ works with its partners to develop effective solutions that offer people better prospects and sustainably improve their living conditions.

Boiler Plate PSD-E

The project "Private Sector Development in Ethiopia" (PSD-E) is implemented by GIZ on behalf of BMZ. It aims to improve growth opportunities for SMEs, start-ups and Small & Growing Businesses (SGBs). To this end, PSD-E strengthens the capacities and private sector orientation of public institutions, business membership organizations (BMOs), startup ecosystem intermediaries and business development service providers (BDSPs). In addition, the project provides direct support to MSMEs and entrepreneurs affected by recent conflicts and crises to sustain or restore their business operations.

Boiler Plate BIC ETHIOPIA (Business Incubator Communities Ethiopia)

BIC Ethiopia (Business Incubation) addresses several bottlenecks in the Ethiopian incubation ecosystem: We address the lack of sustainable and technically sound business models of exciting incubators through regional benchmarking, best practice examples, new revenue models, standardized curricula and professionalized operations. The capacity of incubator staff will be strengthened through appropriate and practical skills, operational and organizational management programs, and follow-up support. The project will work with private financial institutions such as banks and equity investors to facilitate out-of-the-box thinking to create new financial access opportunities for MSMEs.



Boiler Plate EU

The European Union Delegation is a key actor in the relations between the European Union and Ethiopia. In close coordination with the EU Member States' Heads of Mission, its role is to promote political and economic relations between Ethiopia and the European Union, to monitor the implementation of the EU-Ethiopia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and to participate in the implementation of the European Union's assistance programs.

Boiler Plate African Mosaïque

African Mosaïque is a first of its kind, export-oriented fashion design and manufacturing enterprise in Legetafo City. Its design center and manufacturing hub produces thousands of designs and garments each year, and provides training, production and showcasing facilities for other designers, as well as business facilitation services. African Mosaïque is owned and operated by Ethiopian designer and social entrepreneur Anna Getaneh, who spent many years of her successful modeling career in Europe, the United States and South Africa. African Mosaïque's in-house designs are rooted in the philosophy that they must be sourced, designed and developed in Africa, and are high quality, value-added garments, with fabrics and other raw materials sourced primarily from African textile mills. The company employs mostly women, many of whom are young apprentices, and provides mentorship and collaboration opportunities to emerging designers and entrepreneurs in the fashion and apparel industry.

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