

**INNOVATOR'S LAUNCHPAD
GRADUATION MARKS A NEW
CHAPTER FOR UGANDA'S
DIGITAL ENTREPRENEURS**

➤
JULY 2026

THE INNOVATOR'S LAUNCHPAD

VOL 3

INNOVATOR'S LAUNCHPAD GRADUATION

MARKS A NEW CHAPTER FOR UGANDA'S DIGITAL ENTREPRENEURS

The National ICT Innovation Hub celebrated the graduation of **35 innovators** from the **Innovator's Launchpad**, a six-month incubation programme designed to equip early-stage entrepreneurs with the knowledge, networks and support needed to transform promising ideas into sustainable ventures. The graduation marked the culmination of an intensive journey during which participants refined their business models, validated their products, strengthened their market strategies and built the entrepreneurial skills required to navigate Uganda's evolving innovation ecosystem. Throughout the programme, innovators benefited from tailored mentorship, peer learning, technical guidance and exposure to industry experts who challenged them to think beyond developing solutions to building businesses capable of creating lasting impact.

Speaking at the graduation ceremony, the Hub reaffirmed its commitment to nurturing innovation that responds to real societal and economic challenges. By providing innovators with practical support and access to strategic partnerships, the Innovator's Launchpad continues to bridge the gap between innovative ideas and commercially viable enterprises.

The graduating cohort reflected the diversity of Uganda's innovation landscape, with ventures spanning sectors such as digital technology, education, agriculture, financial services, health, creative industries and climate resilience.

- This diversity underscores the growing role of innovation in addressing national development priorities while creating opportunities for employment and inclusive economic growth.

Beyond celebrating individual achievements, the graduation highlighted the importance of sustained investment in Uganda's innovation ecosystem. As these entrepreneurs move into the next phase of their journeys, they carry with them not only stronger businesses but also the confidence, networks and capabilities to contribute meaningfully to the country's digital transformation agenda.

The National ICT Innovation Hub congratulates the graduates of the Innovator's Launchpad and looks forward to supporting their continued growth through mentorship, partnerships and access to opportunities that enable them to scale their innovations.

Looking Ahead

Graduation is not the end of the journey, it is the beginning of a new phase of growth. The Hub remains committed to walking alongside innovators as they refine their products, attract investment, enter new markets and create solutions that improve lives across Uganda and beyond.

As the Hub continues to strengthen Uganda's innovation ecosystem, programmes such as the Innovator's Launchpad demonstrate what is possible when innovators are equipped with the right environment, the right networks and the right support to thrive.





EXPANDING INNOVATION BEYOND KAMPALA: MTN SPARK HUB LAUNCHED AT KABALE UNIVERSITY

The Ministry of ICT and National Guidance, in partnership with MTN Uganda Foundation and Centenary Technology Services, marked a significant milestone in Uganda's digital transformation journey with the launch of the **MTN Spark Hub at Kabale University**.

As the one of four regional innovation hubs under the second phase of the MTN ACE Programme, the Kabale Spark Hub represents a deliberate effort to bring innovation infrastructure, digital skills and entrepreneurship opportunities closer to young people across the country. The initiative reflects a shared vision of ensuring that geography is not a barrier to innovation and that talented young Ugandans can access the resources they need to create solutions for their communities.

Located within Kabale University, the hub will serve not only students but also the wider Kigezi community, providing access to modern digital infrastructure, innovation programmes, mentorship and entrepreneurship support. Through this regional presence, aspiring innovators are now able to develop practical digital skills, collaborate with peers and transform ideas into viable businesses without having to relocate to Kampala.

The launch also reinforces the Ministry's commitment to building a connected national innovation ecosystem. By extending innovation infrastructure to regional universities, the Hub is helping create pathways for talent discovery, startup incubation and technology-driven problem solving that respond to local needs while contributing to Uganda's broader digital economy.

The Kabale Spark Hub forms part of a wider regional expansion programme that will establish innovation hubs across the country. Building on the successful launch in Kabale, preparations are underway for the launch of the MTN Spark Hub at Busitema University, further extending opportunities for innovators in Eastern Uganda. Together with planned hubs in Gulu and Soroti, these regional centres will strengthen local innovation ecosystems by providing young people with access to training, mentorship, collaborative workspaces and entrepreneurship support closer to where they live and study.

Building a National Innovation Ecosystem

The launch of the MTN Spark Hub at Kabale University is more than the opening of a physical space; it is an investment in Uganda's future innovators. By bringing together government, academia and the private sector, the initiative demonstrates the power of collaboration in creating opportunities for young people to develop solutions that address local challenges while contributing to national development.

The forthcoming launch at Busitema University marks another important step towards ensuring that innovation is accessible to every corner of the country. Through these regional hubs, Uganda is nurturing a more inclusive, connected and resilient innovation ecosystem; one where talent can thrive regardless of location.



TURNING PARTNERSHIP INTO ACTION: ADVANCING DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE INNOVATION THROUGH THE NIIH–DASUNS COLLABORATION

The National ICT Innovation Hub took an important step towards building a more inclusive digital ecosystem through the implementation of its Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Diversity Ability Support Network System (Dasuns). Signed on 28 May 2026, the partnership seeks to advance disability-inclusive ICT innovation, digital skilling, mentorship, accessibility and inclusive digital transformation across Uganda.

One of the partnership's first major milestones was the **Innovation Dialogue on Disability Inclusion and the Future of Uganda's Digital Ecosystem**, convened at the National ICT Innovation Hub on 2 July 2026. Bringing together representatives from government, academia, organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), innovation hubs, technology companies, employers, students and civil society, the dialogue created a platform for honest conversations about how Uganda can ensure that no one is left behind in the country's digital transformation.

A key message emerged from the discussions: **technology does not automatically create inclusion**. Participants agreed that accessibility must be intentionally built into the design, financing and deployment of digital solutions,

with persons with disabilities actively participating as users, testers, co-designers, innovators and leaders, not simply as beneficiaries.

The dialogue also highlighted significant opportunities for Uganda's innovation ecosystem. Participants identified innovation hubs as critical spaces for inclusive co-creation and entrepreneurship, while recognising the potential of artificial intelligence, mobile technologies, robotics, digital fabrication and locally developed assistive technologies to improve access, independence and participation. At the same time, they acknowledged persistent barriers, including limited accessibility knowledge, insufficient co-design, high connectivity costs, inaccessible information, limited financing and inadequate pathways into employment for persons with disabilities.

Importantly, the conversation did not end with identifying challenges. Participants developed a practical six-month action agenda that includes building innovators' capacity in inclusive design, establishing user-testing mechanisms involving persons with disabilities, strengthening inclusive skilling and incubation programmes, engaging employers to create more opportunities, and exploring financing pathways for disability-inclusive innovation.



LOOKING AHEAD

The National ICT Innovation Hub views this dialogue as the beginning—not the culmination—of its partnership with Dasuns. Together, the two organisations will work to translate the dialogue's recommendations into tangible programmes that strengthen Uganda's innovation ecosystem while making it more accessible and inclusive for all.

Over the coming months, the partnership will focus on embedding inclusive design principles within innovation programmes, expanding opportunities for innovators with disabilities to participate in incubation and digital skills initiatives, and fostering stronger collaboration between government, academia, industry, organisations of persons with disabilities and development partners. The Hub also looks forward to piloting practical interventions that demonstrate how accessibility can be integrated into technology development from the earliest stages of innovation.

By placing inclusion at the heart of innovation, the National ICT Innovation Hub and Dasuns are helping shape an ecosystem where diversity drives creativity, technology removes barriers rather than creating them, and every innovator has the opportunity to contribute to Uganda's digital future.

FROM COMMITMENT TO ACTION: DFCU PARTNERSHIP DELIVERS 100 COMPUTERS TO ADVANCE DIGITAL INCLUSION

In November 2025, the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance and the **dfcu Foundation** signed a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to accelerate digital skilling, strengthen innovation and expand access to technology across Uganda. The partnership was built on a shared vision of empowering innovators, entrepreneurs, learners and underserved communities with the tools and opportunities needed to participate in the country's digital transformation.

In fulfilment of a key provision of the MoU, **dfcu Bank**, through the **dfcu Foundation**, donated **100 desktop computers** to the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance during a handover ceremony held at the National ICT Innovation Hub.

The computers, preloaded with the **SOMA** digital learning platform, will be deployed to selected schools and digital skilling centres to improve access to technology and support learning in communities where digital devices remain scarce. The initiative directly addresses one of the greatest barriers to digital inclusion; access to computers while expanding opportunities for young people to acquire digital, entrepreneurial and financial literacy skills.

The donation also demonstrates the value of long-term public-private partnerships. Beyond providing equipment, the Ministry and dfcu Foundation are collaborating on digital and enterprise skilling programmes, mentorship, financial literacy, business formalisation and governance support, ensuring that technology is accompanied by the knowledge and skills required to create lasting impact.

As Uganda advances its Digital Transformation Roadmap, partnerships such as this illustrate how shared investment between government and the private sector can accelerate innovation, expand digital opportunities and ensure that more Ugandans are equipped to participate meaningfully in the digital economy.



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: REFACTORY CONTINUES TO SHAPE UGANDA'S DIGITAL TALENT



One of the National ICT Innovation Hub's greatest strengths is its growing network of ecosystem partners who are expanding opportunities for innovators across Uganda. This quarter, we were pleased to host the Refactory Digital Solutions Expo 2026, showcasing the remarkable work Refactory continues to do in developing industry-ready digital talent and home-grown technology solutions.

Held under the theme "Tech Made in Uganda – Built Live!", the expo brought together students, software developers, employers, innovators and technology enthusiasts to experience digital solutions designed and built by Ugandan talent. From software applications to technology-driven business solutions, the exhibition demonstrated the creativity, technical excellence and entrepreneurial spirit emerging from Refactory's programmes.

The event also provided participants with an opportunity to interact directly with developers, gain insight into the product development journey and explore how technology is being applied to solve real challenges across sectors such as business, education, healthcare and public service.

For the National ICT Innovation Hub, hosting the expo reflects our commitment to creating spaces where innovation can be celebrated and where ecosystem partners can connect with government, industry and the wider innovation community. Strong innovation ecosystems are built through collaboration, and organisations like Refactory play a vital role in strengthening Uganda's pipeline of digital talent.

We congratulate the Refactory team for their continued investment in developing the next generation of software engineers, innovators and technology entrepreneurs. Their work complements the Hub's mission of accelerating digital innovation by equipping young people with practical skills that respond to the needs of Uganda's growing digital economy.

As the National ICT Innovation Hub continues to convene innovators and ecosystem partners, we look forward to supporting more initiatives that showcase Ugandan innovation, encourage collaboration and inspire the next generation of technology leaders.



INNOVATOR SPOTLIGHT:
ZEPHANDASHIMYE
– CONNECTING BRANDS
AND CREATORS THROUGH
INNOVATION

Name: ZEPHANDASHIMYE

Role: Co-founder, Goheza

Sector: Digital Marketing Technology /
Creator Economy

Hub Connection: Innovator, National ICT
Innovation Hub Community

What Goheza Does: Connects brands with
digital content creators through a
performance-based platform that enables
creators to earn while helping businesses
amplify their campaigns



Every successful innovation begins with someone who sees an opportunity where others see a challenge. For **Zepha Ndashimye**, Co-founder of **Goheza**, that opportunity lay in transforming how brands collaborate with the growing creator economy.

Goheza is a Ugandan technology platform that connects businesses with digital content creators, enabling brands to launch campaigns while giving creators opportunities to earn income based on the performance of the content they produce. By bringing together brands and thousands of creators on a single platform, Goheza is helping redefine digital marketing while creating new economic opportunities for young people.

As a member of the National ICT Innovation Hub community, Zepha represents a new generation of entrepreneurs who are building technology solutions that respond to changing market needs. His journey reflects the power of combining innovation with a deep understanding of emerging digital trends, particularly the rapid growth of Africa's creator economy.

Beyond developing a technology platform, Zepha is passionate about building an ecosystem where creators are recognised as entrepreneurs in their own right. Through Goheza, content creators are able to access campaigns, showcase their creativity and earn from their influence, while brands benefit from authentic, community-driven digital engagement.

At the National ICT Innovation Hub, we are proud to support innovators like Zepha who are developing scalable solutions with the potential to create jobs, strengthen Uganda's digital economy and demonstrate that locally built technologies can compete on a global stage.

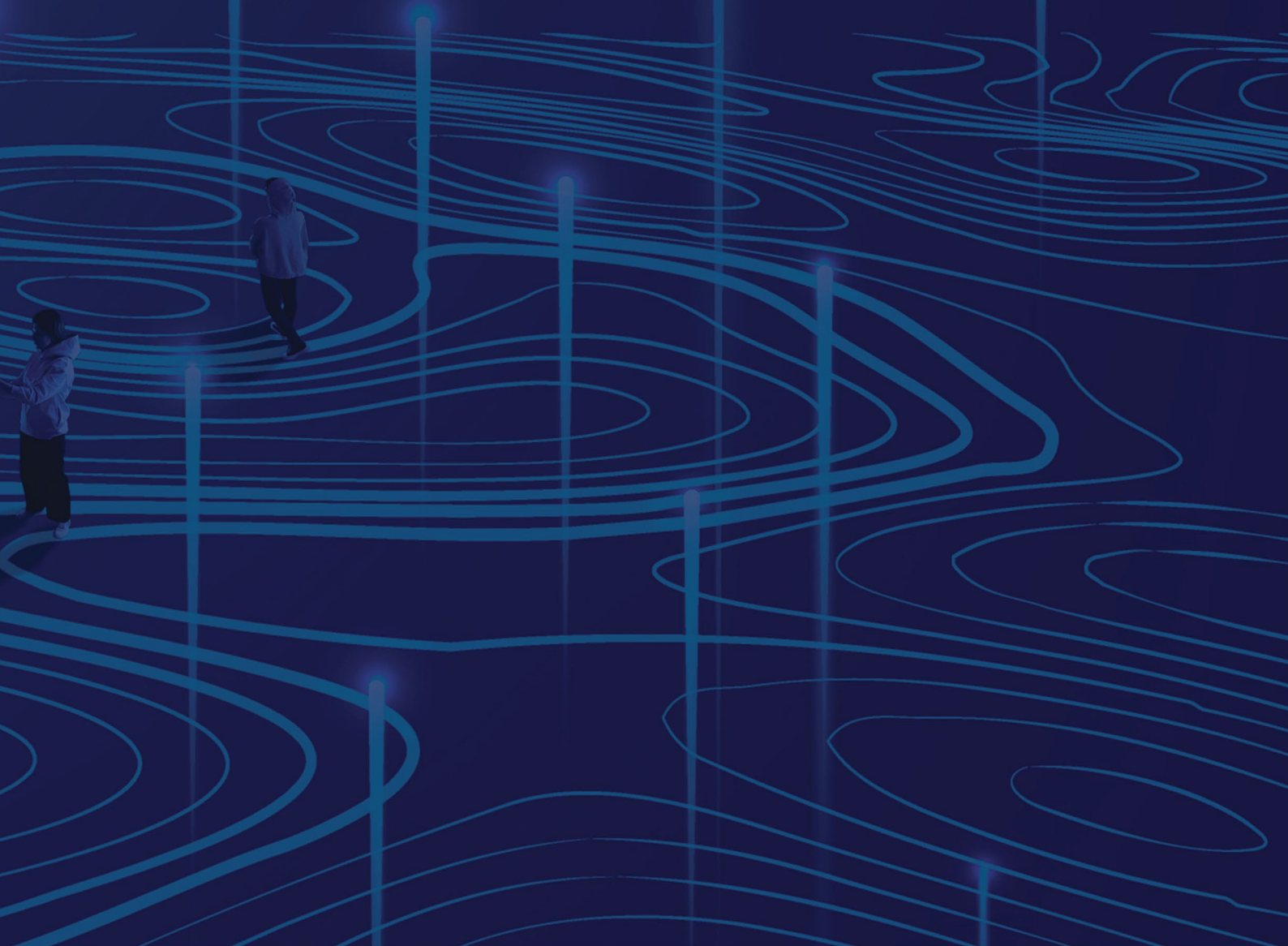
WORDS OF
INSPIRATION

**INNOVATION
IS NOT ONLY ABOUT BUILDING
TECHNOLOGY—IT'S ABOUT
CREATING OPPORTUNITIES
FOR OTHERS TO SUCCEED.**

We celebrate Zepha Ndashimye and the entire Goheza team for their entrepreneurial spirit and look forward to seeing their continued impact on Uganda's innovation



LOOKING AHEAD: **WHAT'S NEXT** FOR THE NATIONAL ICT INNOVATION HUB?



LOOKING AHEAD: WHAT'S NEXT FOR THE NATIONAL ICT INNOVATION HUB?



As we begin **FY2026/27**, the National ICT Innovation Hub is building on the momentum of the past year with new partnerships, programmes and opportunities designed to strengthen Uganda's innovation ecosystem. Here is a glimpse of what our community can look forward to in the months ahead.

Welcoming New Strategic Partners

The Hub has recently welcomed Dojo Hub and the **Certified Risk Management Professionals (CRMP)** into its growing network of strategic partners.

Through our partnership with **Dojo Hub**, we will strengthen innovation support through joint skilling programmes, mentorship, innovation challenges, ecosystem referrals and collaborative initiatives that expand opportunities for startups and entrepreneurs across Uganda.

Our collaboration with **CRMP** will introduce innovators to an often-overlooked aspect of entrepreneurship—**risk management**. Together, we will deliver training, mentorship and professional learning opportunities that help startups build resilient businesses capable of managing operational, financial and strategic risks as they grow.

Expanding Digital Opportunities Through GovNet

The Hub is also working closely with **GovNet Services Ltd** to finalise implementation arrangements that will enable innovators within our ecosystem to access GovNet's technical services and digital infrastructure. Once operational, this collaboration is expected to create new opportunities for innovators to strengthen and commercialise their digital solutions through access to specialised technology support.

Championing Women in Technology

In September, the Hub will collaborate with GirlCode, a Pan-African organisation dedicated to advancing women's participation in technology, to host the **2026 GirlCode Uganda Hackathon** from **4–5 September 2026**. The hackathon will bring together female students, founders and emerging innovators to develop technology solutions, connect with mentors and showcase their creativity. The initiative reflects our shared commitment to increasing women's participation in STEM and strengthening inclusive innovation across Uganda.

Robotics Takes Centre Stage

The future is being built today, and this August the National ICT Innovation Hub will partner with **NextGen Restyling** and **Coderina EdTech** to support the **First East Africa Open Robotics Championship**, scheduled for **20–22 August 2026** in Kampala.

The championship will bring together young innovators from across East Africa to build, innovate and compete, providing an exciting platform for learners to demonstrate their robotics, engineering and problem-solving skills while fostering regional collaboration in STEM education.

Access to Justice Through Digital Skills

Technology has the power to improve not only businesses but also access to essential services. In the coming year, the Hub will partner with members of Uganda's legal fraternity to deliver **Access to Justice Digital Skills Camps**. These camps will explore how technology can strengthen legal awareness, and improve access to justice.



ICTEA PODCAST RETURNS

Our conversations on innovation continue with the launch of **Season Two of the ICTea Podcast**.

The new season will feature innovators, entrepreneurs, policymakers and industry experts discussing emerging technologies, digital transformation, entrepreneurship and the future of Uganda's innovation ecosystem. Whether you are building a startup, exploring new technologies or simply curious about Uganda's digital future, ICTea will continue to serve as a platform for insightful conversations and shared learning.

JOIN US ON THE JOURNEY

The year ahead promises new partnerships, fresh opportunities and exciting collaborations. As the National ICT Innovation Hub continues to connect innovators with knowledge, networks and opportunities, we invite entrepreneurs, ecosystem partners, academia, government, development partners and the private sector to be part of this journey.

Together, we are building a more innovative, inclusive and digitally empowered Uganda.