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Something big is happening in East Africa. Something big is happening in Kenya. No not athletics, that one has been there for quite some time now. This is something else. We call it powerful dynamite in a small box. It is an ore of wealth of knowledge, technology and development. What this ore does is bridging the gap between academics and the real world. By appreciating technology, we can change our approach to different undertakings.

“There’s a way to do it better—find it.”

— **Thomas Edison**

In a lab at the School of Computing & Informatics, University of Nairobi, development is sprouting out of technology. At the innovation lab, they ideate, build and deploy effective and efficient technology to discover growth. C4DLab is a prototyping and innovative startup incubation lab with a reach of a community of more than 70,000 undergraduate and graduate students. This is shepherded by 15 PhD holders who are driven with enthusiasm to changing the world and specifically Africa through technology. They believe if we can create technology, we can change the world.

“Creating a better future requires creativity in the present.”

—**Matthew Goldfinger**

The lab was officially activated on 8/04/2014 alongside the launch of Computing and Informatics Alumni Chapter. This event was graced by the Cabinet Secretary for information and Technology, Dr. Matiang’i during a delightful cocktail event. He challenged C4DLab to come up with home grown solutions giving ample importance on the potential that technology has in the world today. He further reiterated on the massive ability of C4DLab as it is embraced by an enabling atmosphere. So far, C4DLab has built 9 prototypes of very innovative products like Games for Learning (G4L) and Chura.

The actual launch of the lab was late 2013 and it received 24 applicants. 12 startups have been incubated so far. Through the incubations, the startups are fragmented into very basic building blocks and given multidimensional perspectives. This provides the best environment for the perfect surveillance of the startup in numerous salient facets.

Various events inform of workshops, bootcamps, seminars etc are held regularly for the main purpose of sharing knowledge. The latest one being Intel ideation camp where Intel corporation visited the lab. So many other local and international companies are planning to be involved and associated with this new wave of technology that is sweeping Kenya.

“Knowledge not shared is wasted”

– **Clan Jacobs.**

The Lab is beginning by basically focusing on the fundamental pillars for development in Kenya. This includes using technology in the health sector, business and infrastructure sector, agricultural sector and the education sector. This particular sectors form the core of the Kenyan vision 2030. The G4L is an explicit example of innovation under the education sector. It is tailored for learning with fun for primary school pupils. Digital matatu problem is an example falling in the category of business and infrastructure. It was developed in association of Columbia University CSUD, MIT Civic Data Design Lab and Groupshot. Being Nairobi’s first comprehensive route map; it solves the pertinent matatu complications in the city.

There are plans to extend innovation to other industries like entertainment and art. Since Africa remains under so much employment distress, empowering all this sectors will ameliorate the situation.

“The impossible is often the untried.”

– **J. Goodwin.**

Dr. Tonny Omwansa who is the lab’s coordinator has set a solid foundation by undertaking a research on mobile money. Mpesa is the largest mobile money service in the world and the book “Money, Real Quick” by Tonny the first on Mpesa. This just goes to show the expertise under which the lab is steered. Dr. Tonny insists that the approach C4DLab is taking is mature, well calculated and result-driven. With these principles, we can just watch this space.

“Creativity can solve almost any problem. The creative act, the defeat of habit by originality, overcomes everything.”

– **George Lois.**