

Innovation hubs giving hope to ICT innovators

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Graduates of Information Technology that are pregnant with ideas can now get workplaces in innovation hubs. COURTESY PHOTO

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By Joan Salmon

Although she graduated from university with a first class degree in Information Technology in 2011, Rita Nakiryia failed to get a job.

“It was not because I did not know what to do but that at most interviews, I lost the opportunity to my male counterparts. At one of the interviews, a human resource personnel told me they were not willing to employ women for such assignments that

required among others working longer hours and sometimes in the wee hours of the morning,” she recalls.

This was eight years ago. Today, Nakiryra marvels at the numerous opportunities people in her field have to explore.

One such opportunity is innovation villages which Nakiryra says would have fostered her love for programming and database management as she would have found likeminded people to work with who would push her to greater heights.

Enabling innovation

Anatoli Kirigwajjo, the founder at Yunga Technologies, is one of the people that have a space at the Innovation Village in Ntinda and says he got to know about it from a friend who had subscribed to it. “He shared the benefits and I was sold out.”

For many years, Kirigwajjo had always wanted to run his own company as a tech-entrepreneur. And as of 2016, his idea of a company meant having a beautifully furnished office whose rent he could not afford in Kampala.

“When my friend introduced me to the Innovation Village with its co-working space mode of operation for many entrepreneurs who cannot afford expensive offices, I was excited. That meant that at a very small budget of about USD100 (about Shs360,000), I would find Wifi, a good table and chair, a shelf, a boardroom for meeting my customers and a pantry all set up for me. All I needed was my laptop in order to start working on my idea.”