



King Baudouin African Development Prize

Winners of the 2016-2017 King Baudouin African Development Prize

BarefootLaw (Uganda), Farmerline (Ghana) and Kytabu (Kenya), which showcase the creativity of young, African entrepreneurs to provide innovative solutions for local communities to better access knowledge in fields as diverse as the law, agriculture and education.

BarefootLaw Ltd - Uganda (see <http://barefootlaw.org/>)

BarefootLaw is the first on-line legal service provider in East Africa and possibly the African continent. BarefootLaw started in 2012 as the idea of Gerald Abila, then a law student who wanted to equip people with knowledge and understanding of the law so that everyone could have equal and fair access to justice. Registered in September 2016 as an NGO in Uganda, it is now run by a group of young lawyers and ICT experts who are passionate about the power of legal knowledge and the potential of information technology to transform people's lives.

By demystifying the law through simple, easily understood language and making the information readily available and accessible in a highly cost-effective way, BarefootLaw addresses an important development need in Uganda, empowering citizens to claim their rights and access law and justice.

BarefootLaw delivers legal information, advice and support on a mass scale via ten platforms. Seven of the platforms are technology driven (SMS, Facebook, Twitter, Skype, Call center, Email, Nodes) and three use traditional methods (partnerships, walk-ins and community engagements, including legal clinics, radio programs and popular theatre).

Through a forthcoming Nodes Network, BarefootLaw aims at extending their services to the rural unconnected population (people without access to the internet and mobile devices).

BarefootLaw has reached out with legal information to 250,000 - 300,000 persons on average each month, and responded to approximately 30,000 legal queries last year. Their last annual expenditures amounted around € 45,000.



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Gerald Abila established and now chairs the Innovation Working Group comprising the 15 NGOs in Uganda. In this role he is able to promote and support innovation in the whole legal services sector in Uganda. Gerald Abila is also Vice President of Uganda Young ICT Innovators Hub.

Farmerline Ltd - Ghana (see <http://farmerline.co/>)

Farmerline is a software company established in 2013 that builds technologies to connect rural customers to information, financial tools, and supply chains. Farmerline's proprietary MERGDATA software offers three primary products: content messaging, remote surveying, and field-agent based data collection. The company was started by two graduates from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology : Alloysius Attah, current CEO, and Emmanuel Owusu Addai, current Chief technology officer.

Farmerline's mission statement is "to transform millions of smallholder farmers into successful entrepreneurs by building global technologies merged with local expertise". Their vision is to empower small-scale farmers to become more prosperous through direct access to agricultural information and improved communication channels among farmers and external organizations.

Farmerline's content messaging, remote surveying, and data collection services have been deployed across 6 sectors and 5 countries by companies, NGOs, and governments. Farmerline has reached over 200,000 users across West Africa. Farmerline's primary business line involves business-to-business sales (B2B) to large organizations and associations who work with networks of farmers. They customize their proprietary MERGDATA services to meet the needs of such organizations, and through these partners reach more than 200,000 farmers.

The launch in 2013 was supported by the bootstrapping of its co-founders until achieving financial break-even through revenues in 2015. The company has been profitable and cash-flow positive since, and generated over USD 300,000 in revenue last year.

Farmerline is not alone on this field of work. However, Farmerline clearly stands out in four regards when it comes to distributing bulk vocal messages in local languages to remote farmers.



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Kytabu Inc. - Kenya (see <http://kytabu.com/>)

Founded in 2012 by Anthony (Tonee) Ndungu, Kytabu is an Education Technology company focusing on development and distribution of digital educational curriculum content in the East African region, including Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Malawi. Currently starting in Kenya, Kytabu has developed an android application for mobile devices that enables teachers and students to rent curriculum required digital textbooks using mobile money for various periods of time (a day, week, month or school term) to enable accessibility and affordability.

Kytabu was born from the need to address a lack of access to school text books by students at a community school his father had started. He approached Tonee, a technology entrepreneur running a few software companies with the problem. Kytabu was the end product. After several iterations to the original concept, the first test version of the Kytabu App went to market in July of 2016. It is now picking up steam and was selected by smaller schools in rural areas and urban settlements as an alternative to textbooks.

Kytabu's niche is its ability to ride on the mobile money penetration (currently at 82%) phenomenon in Eastern Africa and the prevalence of smart devices (currently at 61%) in the region to deliver content for education.

Kytabu's main activities:

- Distributing books in education to its platform, becoming the first Kenyan company to do so. This means that all books in the education curriculum are available on the application for all students in the Kenyan learning system;
- Creating localized digital content that is in line with the required curriculum, with the help of teachers and students (including video, audio, animation, interactive and augmented reality);
- Holding frequent tech days in various schools to demystify technology to teachers and students and organizing week-long holiday tech camps where both programming skills and electronics skills are taught to teenagers;
- Playing a big role in the Kenyan government's digital content and device distribution process (tablet distribution program involving 16000 schools and more than 1.2 million laptops) by advising on best practices in getting relevant content into the classrooms, how to measure engagement and impact and how to use that data to improve outcomes.



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Making this learning process attractive is an important driver both for the teachers and students. Tonee is clear on making sure the growth of Kytabu is driven by students working with each other and teachers helping them do that from anywhere in the country.

In the last three years from 2014 to 2016, Kytabu has been operating with a budget of €218,400.

Prior to Kytabu, Tonee was the founder and director of the NAILAB (Nairobi Labs), a co-creation hub that spun out technology companies in Kenya and was one of the pillars of the technological revolution that took over the East African region.
