HackCorruption announces 5 winning ideas to combat corruption through emerging technologies

HackCorruption is a hybrid Tech4Good event, supported by the U.S. Department of State, that aims to bring people together to co-create anti-corruption solutions

WASHINGTON D.C., DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, UNITED STATES, August 8, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- HackCorruption, a people-powered hackathon to unearth anti-corruption solutions, is proud to announce the winners from the inaugural event in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Accountability Lab (AL) and the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) hosted 100 virtual and in-person participants for the innovative Tech4Good event between July 22 and 24. After a competitive judging process, five teams have been named as overall winners with solutions that addressed a lack of transparency in public procurement processes and established creative whistleblowing platforms and open data dashboards. The winning teams include Angaza, TransProcure, Citizen Watch, Tech Stars and CMD Transparent. Participants were drawn from South Africa, Lesotho, Zambia, Botswana, Namibia, and Kenya, with more than 40% of them women.

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Team Angaza proposed a streamlined data standard to flag price anomalies in the tendering process that incorporates citizens in monitoring bids, while TransProcure entered an idea to automate tender processes, publicizing bid amounts to curb corruption during bid selection and assessing the reputation of bidders.

Citizen Watch floated an e-government procurement monitoring system that deconstructs procurement information and allows users to monitor each stage of the tender process. Tech Stars created a smart dashboard that allows citizens to monitor local budget allocations, tender awards and implementation progress, along with a whistleblowing function to report allegations about wastage and fraud. Rounding up the group, CMD Transparent proposed a transparent e-procurement system that exposes engagements between governments and bidders, flagging inflated pricing and overspending in real time.

Frank Brown, Director of CIPE's Anti-Corruption and Governance Center who sat on the judging panel, commented on the potential for the winning teams' ideas to close procurement and open data loopholes in southern and East Africa. "I was extremely impressed with the quality of the top submissions, especially their relevance, practicality, and ingenuity. It was often hard to believe that these teams had, in such a short amount of time, come up with clever, scalable solutions to corruption problems that have been bedeviling governments for years, if not decades," he said.

The hackathon is supported by the Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) at the U.S. Department of State through the Anti-Corruption Solutions Through Emerging Technologies (ASET) program. ASET advances the U.S. Strategy on Countering Corruption and is being undertaken in conjunction with the Summit for Democracy Year of Action.

Richard Nephew, the United States Coordinator on Global Anti-Corruption at the State Department, emphasized that the hackathon is part of a renewed effort to bring together diverse stakeholders to collaborate on developing, improving and applying technological solutions to systemic corruption challenges.

"I'm so excited to see such diverse participation from so many countries, sectors and technical backgrounds. Corruption is a complex problem and there is a great power in bringing together people with different skill sets and varying perspectives to identify new and innovative solutions," Nephew added.

The winning teams are now eligible for financial support of up to $10,000 to build prototypes of their ideas at a bootcamp in October.

HackCorruption Coordinator and Global Director of Learning at AL, Cheri-Leigh Erasmus, said the winning tools went a long way in addressing systemic corruption problems in the participating countries. "We introduced reverse pitches as part of the event, and so we had members of civil society and government agencies reverse pitching ideas for which they thought a tech tool would be a helpful solution. At the end of the day, this ensures that there's more likelihood of buy-in. In many ways, coming up with a governance solution is reading the market about what people and organizations or governments really need."

Sheena Adams
Accountability Lab
+27 83 411 3161
sheena@accountabilitylab.org

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