The Inaugural All-Female African Class of Cardano ADA Blockchain Developers
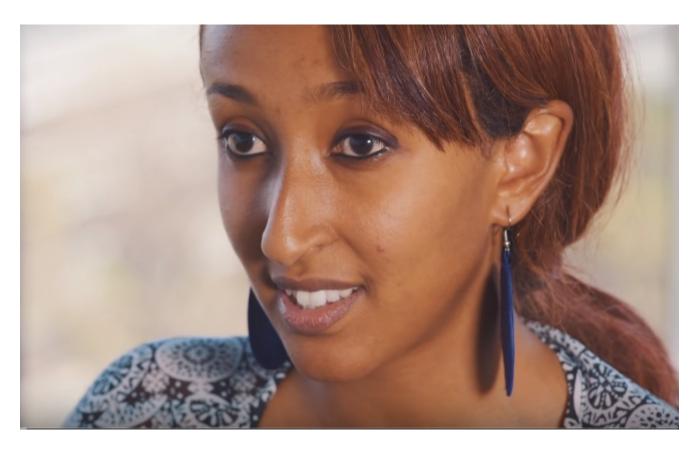
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An all-female class of highly driven women have become the very first African class trained to develop and build on Cardano, the first third generation blockchain to evolve out of a scientific philosophy. The initiative was born out of a signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between IOHK - the company overseeing the technical development of Cardano, and the Ethiopian government in May 2018. The class, consisting of nineteen Ethiopian and four Ugandan women, graduated on March 22 following a 3-month course led by Lars Brünjes, PhD - Director of Education at IOHK. The Ugandan students are all graduates of Makerere University, the largest university in Uganda. The other nineteen students are all natives of Ethiopia, the country where the MOU was signed. The course was designed to give these women the skills and tools needed to develop on Cardano. The tools involved understanding and knowing how to use Haskell, the programming language behind Cardano. They also learned Plutus, the programming language that will allow them to create smart contracts on Cardano in the future.

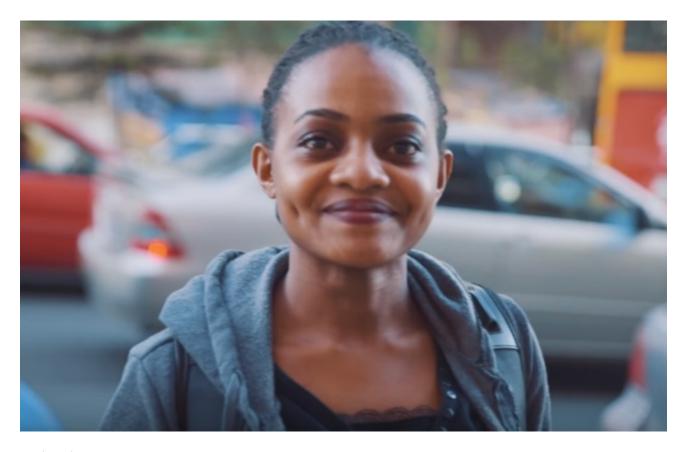## Cardano's Vast Potential in Africa: What Excites the Graduates the Most

Cardano has several potential applications in Africa, many of which the graduates are excited to explore and develop. For the students, it is a great privilege to help build transparent and decentralized solutions to real-world problems. These solutions range across multiple industries, from agriculture to healthcare.

Student Melikte Paulos has a keen interest in Cardano's potential to revolutionize the healthcare industry. Specifically, this involves storing patient records on the Cardano blockchain.
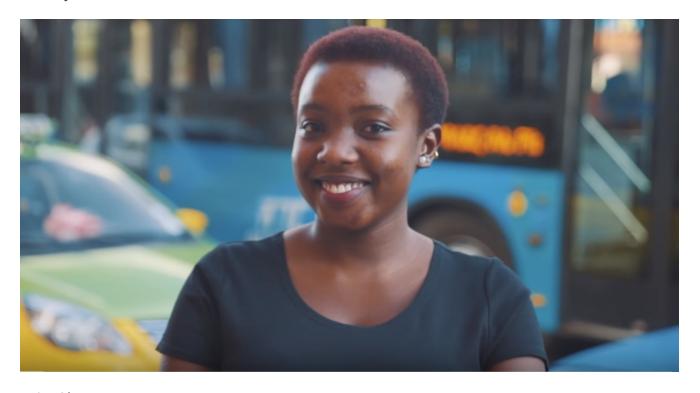
Melikte Paulos

For student Sandra Alinitwe, recording the sale of land on Cardano would prevent the same land from being sold more than once.

Sandra Alinitwe

A land registry based on the Cardano blockchain would help mitigate disputes over land ownership. Daizy Obura is highly interested in Cardano's applications throughout the supply chain, particularly in the coffee industry.

Daizy Obura

The coffee industry is an area of particular focus for Cardano, as it can provide higher levels of transparency throughout the supply chain ultimately benefiting stakeholders such as coffee growers who are commonly disadvantaged by opaque pricing and fees dealt by middlemen. Helixworks, a company taking part in the dLab/EMURGO startup accelerator program have identified the potential of improving supply chain in the coffee industry in Ethiopia. Helixworks are aiming to achieve supply chain transparency by adding DNA-based ID tags to products and adding this information on to the blockchain.

Elizabeth, a student in the course from Uganda, sees Cardano and blockchain technology as being like a stepping stone for Uganda. For her, the two key advantages that the technology brings is security and transparency which are especially common issues in emerging markets where parties with greater leverage enjoy advantages due to the lack of clear information available.

The four female students sponsored by Uganda Communications Commission (UCC); Daizy Obura, Elizabeth Ahumuza, Lillian Namusisi, and Sandra Alinaitwe. (Photo by JAVIRA SSEBWAMI)

The Journey to Graduation

For many of the students, the three month course presented a huge opportunity that came with many challenges that ranged from mastering a new programming language, logistical challenges of travelling long hours and making personal sacrifices. These included being far from home and being away from friends and family, including leaving a child at home with family members and not being able to see one's child for three months. One student, Lilian, wrote about how difficult it was to convince her family to go and study at the program.

However, the opportunities greatly outweighed the difficulties. According to a student in the program Daizy Obura, "People would rather outsource the technologies than trusting us who have done 4 or 3-year courses." The program represented a strong investment in female developers to develop solutions for their local communities and economies. The students were extremely excited to use Cardano, as it represents an emerging technology which will play an increasingly important role in the future. Graduating from the program was a massive boost to the careers of the students as well. The entire class will be hired by IOHK in various roles throughout the company.

Cardano's Commitment to Africa & Education

The inaugural graduating class of 23 all-female Cardano developers are fully equipped to use Cardano to build new and exciting applications in the future. Following the success of EMURGO's Yoroi and with the upcoming arrival of full decentralization for Cardano, Africa is a continent that is set to benefit massively from the advantages Cardano brings. The students identified many opportunities, across health, supply chain and land registry that would add value in meaningful ways to their societies. Education is one of the core base foundations at the heart of Cardano which will enable aspiring developers to enhance their livelihoods with rewarding careers and improve societies with high value applications on top of Cardano. EMURGO is also in the process of offering quality blockchain developer courses to students and enterprises via its educational unit launch in India. At EMURGO, we are constantly striving to help businesses looking to develop and grow with Cardano. If you have a business looking for consulting or advice, be sure to reach out to us.

About EMURGO

EMURGO drives the adoption of Cardano and adds value to ADA holders by building, investing in, and advising projects or organizations that adopt Cardano's decentralized blockchain ecosystem. EMURGO leverages its expertise in blockchain R&D as well as its global network of related blockchain and industry partners to support ventures globally.

EMURGO is the official commercial and venture arm of the Cardano project, registered in Tokyo, Japan since June 2017 and in Singapore since May 2018. EMURGO is uniquely affiliated and works closely with IOHK to grow Cardano's ecosystem globally and promote the adoption of the Cardano blockchain. To learn more about the project, visit the EMURGO website.

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