

Governments Discuss Innovation

Various governments are involved in the efforts to promote innovation in Kenya and the region. Strategic embassies discuss initiatives funded by their governments and their role in spurring innovation and enhancing enterprise development.

100 years ago Finland was a poor country then they invested in people and education and now Finland is leading in so many ways.

This was revealed by the Finland Ambassador H.E. Tarja Fernandez during the Innovation week 2017.

Speaking at the UoN towers in a side event on a panel of ambassadors, H.E Fernandez said that Finland supports innovations funded by UNICEF, works with World Bank to support agriculture, supports acceleration program, capacity building and promotes business partnerships with developing countries.

She said that in today's economy, start-ups is the way to go.

During the innovation week, Finnish embassy held a codebus that was teaching children to code and training trainers to create music immediately using coding.

As for the Israel Ambassador, H.E Yahel Vilan his was a country of immigrants and they had a shortage of water.

The Israel government has really invested in innovation and technology. Through Innovation, the government was able to deal with the issue of water shortage and Israel is now known for Agriculture.

The government also created Authorities and a ministry to deal with innovation issues that has invested in start-ups.

Ambassador Vilan said that their government funds incubators and caters for the start-ups' needs for about 1-2 years.

He urged Universities in Kenya to find ways to commercialize their research; from intellectual property to commercialized products.

The ambassador also said that its not a matter of copy and paste, he said that what works in Israel may or may not necessarily work in Kenya. He applauded the University of Nairobi for holding such forums which is one of the ways Kenya is working on innovations and development.

On his part, the Ambassador of South Korea, H.E. Ambassador Kwon Yound-Dae gave a summary on how the government used innovation and technology to restore the country after the 1953 Korean war.

He said, the war left them suffering from poverty and hunger and they relied on foreign aid.

Over time there is an E-government, E-public service portal, E-participation portal and their government is now transparent and accountable to all the South Korean citizens.

In conclusion, Innovation is not necessarily about IT and technology but about how people do things. Kenya can learn from the different governments and create its own solutions based on its problems.