



24/2/2021

The National Council for Women, UN Women, and Flat6Labs Launch a Hackathon on “Fighting Violence against Women Using Technology”

Joint Press Release

For Immediate Release

Cairo, 24 February 2021 — Today marks the launch “Fighting Violence Against Women Using Technology” Hackathon on social media platforms. This hackathon is organized by StartEgypt powered by Flat6Labs in collaboration with the National Council for Women (NCW) and UN Women Egypt, recognising the significant role that entrepreneurship plays in providing innovative solutions to address societal issues. The hackathon challenge includes three key tracks: fighting cybercrimes against women using technology, combating forms of violence against women in the public sphere, and digitization of violence against women complaints and tracking mechanism with relevant government authorities. The hackathon will be virtually held in March in commemoration of the “Women's Month”.

H.E. Dr. Maya Morsy, President of the National Council for Women (NCW), stated that "Addressing violence against women in all its forms is a crucial necessity and is considered a serious societal issue which harms women and girls, as well as their families and communities. All means and tools must be utilized to confront violence against women and pursue practical solutions to face it, while addressing the root causes". "Technological advancement is a double-edged tool. Despite its role in creating new forms of violence against women, it has also become one of the most important tools that we can use positively and effectively to address this issue that has become a major concern for the entire society" Dr. Morsy added. “By launching this hackathon with our partners, we endeavor to pursue creative and innovative

ideas that are in line with the times and challenges imposed on us, and contribute to working towards a society free from violence against women.” Dr.Morsy stated.

Ms. Christine Arab, UN Women Representative in Egypt expressed her pleasure in partnering with the National Council for Women and the Flat6Labs 'StartEgypt' program in launching this hackathon since it represents the consolidated efforts of the government, the business sector and the United Nations in providing opportunities for entrepreneurs to solve societal problems using technology. She added, “The COVID-19 pandemic has imposed a new reality on us, which requires finding innovative solutions using technological means to address violence against women in the public and virtual spheres. We also seek to use economic empowerment programs, especially the component on entrepreneurship, to build distinct partnerships aimed at empowering women on all levels. Greater economic autonomy for women results in their greater voice and leadership in the home and in public life. ” Ms. Arab also indicated that the Joint Programme between UN Women and UNIDO implemented in partnership with the National Council for Women and the Ministry of Trade and Industry, and with the support of the Government of Canada, will continue to provide an opportunity for innovative ideas that solve societal problems through entrepreneurship.

Mr. Hassan Mansi, Program Director of ‘StartEgypt’ powered by Flat6Labs, stated that “Egyptian women are not only one half of society, but also Egyptian women entrepreneurs have proven an unprecedented ability to succeed and compete at various levels. At Flat6Labs, we are proud not only of the nearly 40% participation of female entrepreneurs in our various programs, but also proud of the graduates who have been able to make a qualitative impact in their field, whether graduates of the StartEgypt business incubator, such as Salma Medhat, the founder of “*Matkhafeesh*” , an online application to fight harassment. We are also proud of Flat6Labs business accelerator graduates such as "Doaa Aref" who through her online application "*Shifa*" was able to provide a unique service to deliver medicine to chronic disease patients in Egypt, and attract investors to grow her business and help in her journey towards excellence."

StartEgypt Program, supported by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and managed by Flat6Labs, is specifically designed to inspire and support thousands of Egyptian entrepreneurs in the field of community impact. StartEgypt was incepted in 2017 and started its first round in June 2018.

The Hackathon’s jury includes representatives from the National Council for Women, UN Women Egypt Country Office, the Economic Council of the British

Embassy in Cairo, and StartEgypt Program. Three teams will be selected to win Hackathon cash prizes for a total of EGP 20,000. In addition, the winning teams will be hosted in the business incubator of the StartEgypt Program to receive the appropriate training and guidance to develop their projects.

The “Fighting Violence Against Women Using Technology” hackathon is a digital competition that targets young male and female entrepreneurs that offer digital solutions that could help the society in facing various forms of violence against women and girls, whether virtual (cyber harassment, extortion, etc.) or in public and private places (sexual harassment, domestic violence, female genital mutilation, etc.).

To apply for the Hackathon <https://startegypt.com/ar/Events>

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