IBM’s Cairo hackathon tackled Water-Related Natural Disasters in Egypt

In collaboration with RiseUp Summit, IBM called on Egypt’s top developers to build and deploy solutions to aid in disaster response

Cairo, Egypt – 2 July 2019: IBM (NYSE: IBM) and RiseUp Summit hosted the Code and Response: Cairo Hackathon. The challenge brought startups, academics, and enterprise developers together to create solutions that can help mitigate the effects of natural disasters related to flooding, drought, and water scarcity in Egypt, with a focus on community health and well-being.

With the climate conditions expected to get drier and the rapidly growing population, Egypt is facing significant water-related challenges such as water scarcity, inefficient irrigation, and water pollution. IBM’s Cairo Hackathon drew Egypt’s top developers to the American University campus for a team-based contest to create applications and tech solutions to help communities get access to clean water, and deal with floods and droughts; while learning new IBM technologies.

The teams, who were a mix of university students, recent graduates, and industry professionals, presented innovative ideas on solutions that can help address water-related challenges in Egypt. Over two days, the teams kicked off with ideation, followed by prototyping, and then presented and demonstrated their ideas to the judges. Participants received full support and mentoring from IBM's technical experts and business professionals.

The winning project – Team Cantalopa, four students from the German University in Cairo – created and developed on the IBM Cloud a points reward system for household water meters to encourage significant reduction of water use. The judging committee included senior executives from IBM and esteemed representatives from Egypt’s Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation, the Red Crescent, RiseUp Summit, UNICEF, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and an environmental consultant.

The hackathon is part of IBM’s Code and Response program, a $25 million, four-year deployment initiative which helps build and deploy technology solutions to help save lives ahead of and in the aftermath of disasters. One of its projects is the implementation of winning open source solutions from the Call for Code Global Challenge, a worldwide, multi-year activity. Call for Code aims to unite the world's 23 million developers and data scientists to unleash the power of cloud, AI, blockchain and IoT technologies to solve pressing global problems with sustainable and scalable open source technologies.

“The Code and Response: Cairo Hackathon demonstrates IBM's commitment to put technology to work for saving lives,” said Wael Abdoush, General Manager, IBM Egypt. “Using the power of Cloud, Digital, AI, blockchain and IoT, our goal is to unite and inspire developers to create sustainable and scalable solutions to one of Egypt’s most pressing challenges."

All the hackathon participants are encouraged to submit their solutions to the Call for Code 2019 Global Challenge, with the opportunity to receive mentorship from IBM experts and potential company funding through the Code and Response effort.

Over 100,000 developers from 156 nations participated in the Call for Code 2018 Global Challenge. More than 2,500 applications were built using IBM Cloud technology to reduce the impact of natural disasters.