Expanding open source in Africa
She Code Africa Contributhon

Why Contributhon?
Why Contributhon (Organizers)?

An Africa wide open source Bootcamp focused on:

- building more women OSS contributors
- creating more diversity in the African open source ecosystem.
Why Contributhon (Jenkins Project) ?

Improve Jenkins core and plugins with
- more contributors
- solutions to valuable problems

Improve Jenkins project
- develop group mentoring techniques
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Who is involved?
Who’s involved

Sponsoring organizations fund the program

- Companies
- Foundations

Funding pays participants $500 for a month of contribution to open source
Who’s involved

Open source mentoring organizations

- Help participants improve their project

Propose projects with tasks
Provide mentors to coach participants
Share feedback with participants
Evaluate project at its conclusion
Who’s involved

Candidates - 180+ Women in Africa
- Students
- Recent graduates

Participants - 16 Women

Apply to the program
Participants selected based on work samples, role descriptions, and background
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What was the project?
Jenkins Pipeline Domain Specific Language is **code**

- Users are unfamiliar with the generator tools
- Users want more examples
- Users want more help

Help the users find existing resources

Provide more examples and help

Participants learn Jenkins Pipeline, Java build
Progressively more challenging steps

- Create a Jenkins Pipeline
- Build a Jenkins plugin
- Modify existing Pipeline help
- Insert missing Pipeline help
- Suggest Pipeline Syntax snippet generator in plugin docs
- Add snippet generator hints to Pipeline step help

We thought this was a pretty good plan, but …

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Challenges and surprises
Challenges (Organizers)

- Finding Mentoring Organizations
- Funding and Sponsors
  - Cross Country Boundaries
- Selecting appropriate Program Timelines
- Timezone Complexity
Challenges (Organizers)

- Matching selected participants with available projects
- Managing differences in participants knowledge of open source tools like git, etc.
Don’t miss the real goal!

Help participants develop skills to be ongoing contributors to open source

Project tasks should help the participants develop open source skills

Encourage interaction between mentors and participants
Remember the participants

Most participants are

- Beginning as developers
- Javascript their most likely language
- Web development most likely experience
- Enthusiastic but inexperienced

First experience with Jenkins
First experience with Java
Limited experience with Git and GitHub
Group mentoring is more difficult

Uncomfortable asking questions
Assume others already know the answers
Scheduled group time rarely works for all
New communication channels and patterns

⇒ Technical introduction sessions
⇒ Personal introductions during mentoring
⇒ Mentors praise and encourage questions
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Success Metrics
Success Metrics (Organizers)

- Applicants from 7 African Countries (Cameroon, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda, Zimbabwe)
- 3 African Countries Participation (Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda)
More open source contributors from Africa

Success: 87% Mentees passing the program

Satisfaction: 97% Satisfied Participants
Thank you!

Zainab Abubakar and Mark Waite
Expanding Open Source in Africa - Experience Report