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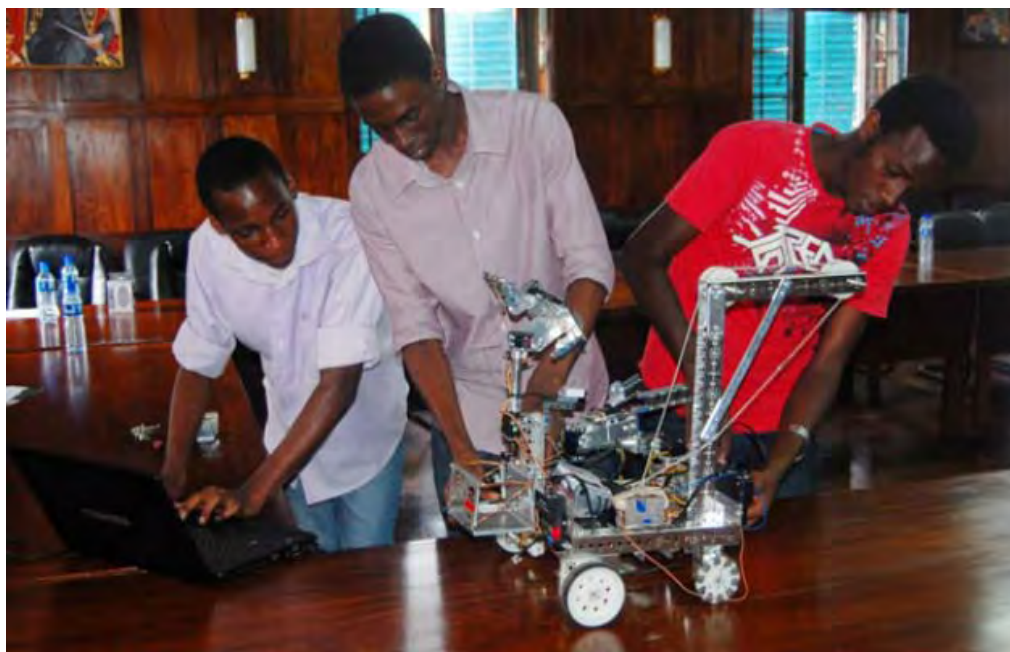
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Ugandan innovators don't get the credit they deserve

Posted By Jackee Budesta Batanda ■ Wednesday, June 6, 2012 - 9:58 AM ■ [Share](#)



Three Ugandan pre-university students, Alvin Kabwama, Nigel Kinyera, and David Tusubira, have **designed** a bomb detector and detonator prototype. The design was **announced** at a press conference and has since made headlines, but it has been met with mixed emotions. While some people applaud the students' initiative, the majority of Ugandans are skeptical of their work.

Some have gone on to denounce a prototype car created last year by students from Makerere University as part of an MIT partnership. The argument is that the design was unoriginal, using parts from other car models. Such critics fail to see that this is exactly how most industrial innovations come about. Prototypes like this one are how you get to the developments that revolutionize societies.

So it's refreshing to see that these three young boys, instead of spending time in the clubs like their peers, are becoming part of something larger. The bomb detector is a response to a pressing issue

in the community: Uganda has experienced several bomb scares over the past few years. The most recent threat was the **2010 twin bomb attacks** against crowds watching the World Cup soccer games at different venues in Kampala; scores of people died and many others were injured. The attacks were attributed to the **al-shabaab** militant group operating out of Somalia.

Many Ugandans still remember the devastation of that night. A device created by Ugandan youth that could potentially defuse such bombs should be enthusiastically welcomed. If Uganda could create the conditions for a surge of investment into science and technology, and the encouragement of initiatives just like these, the country would be able to do a lot more for itself. Investing in our youth is the way that the country will make great leaps.

Jackee tweets at **@JackeeBatanda**

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