IBM ouvre un nouveau laboratoire de recherche au Kenya

L'Afrique accueille le douzième laboratoire mondial d'IBM Research

Paris - 13 août 2012: IBM (NYSE: IBM) annonce l'ouverture de son premier laboratoire de recherche sur le continent africain. Il se situera à Nairobi, au Kenya.

Différents projets de recherche y seront menés afin de résoudre des problèmes inhérents au continent africain.

L'IBM Research - Afrique se penchera notamment sur les enjeux clés pour le continent tels que : le secteur public nouvelle génération, le déploiement de villes plus intelligentes avec une attention particulière à la gestion de l'eau, au transport, ou encore le développement de compétences utiles au développement économique.

Le nouveau laboratoire se dotera d'un programme de scientifiques résidents. Ce programme international de recrutement est conçu pour les Kenyans et les autres candidats potentiels du continent. Il vise à attirer les meilleurs talents en R&D afin qu'ils travaillent au côté des chercheurs IBM dans ce laboratoire.

Les scientifiques résidents sont des pré- et post-doctorants, issus du milieu académique, du gouvernement et de l'industrie. Ils commencent par une titularisation d'un an, avec une option pour prolonger cette période.

En tant que scientifiques résidents, ils sont pleinement intégrés au réseau mondial de laboratoires IBM. Chaque scientifique résident travaillera de concert avec les chercheurs IBM afin de mener à bien son projet de recherche.

Avec l'ouverture de ce nouveau laboratoire, IBM réaffirme son investissement en Afrique. Ce programme d'expansion fait partie d'un plan de développement global destiné à accroitre la présence d'IBM dans la région connaissant la croissance la plus rapide du monde.

La présence d'IBM dans plus de 20 pays africains montre le potentiel énorme en termes de recherche et de mise en œuvre de systèmes plus intelligents, applicables au monde des affaires, au gouvernement et à la société africaine dans son ensemble.

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New IBM Research Lab to Open In Kenya

IBM Research - Africa will be Company's Twelfth Global Lab

Yorktown Heights, N.Y. and Nairobi, Kenya - 14 Aug 2012: IBM (NYSE:IBM) today announced it is opening its first IBM Research lab on the African continent.

IBM Research - Africa will have its first location in Nairobi, Kenya in collaboration between the Ministry of Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) through the Kenya ICT Board. It will conduct basic and applied research focused on solving problems relevant to Africa and contribute to the building of a science and technology base for the continent.

"IBM's commitment to undertake the proposed research agenda will contribute greatly to our national priorities as part of Kenya's Vision 2030," said His Excellency Honorable Mwai Kibaki, President of Kenya. "We look forward to delivering world-class research and innovation as part of IBM's Smarter Planet initiative and playing an important role as an IT leader on the African continent."

Key research areas that will be explored by IBM Research - Africa include:

-        Next Generation Public Sector: Governments have a mission critical role to play in the growth and sustainable developments in Africa. With the right kind of ICT, including big data solutions, advanced analytics, and cloud technologies, government organizations can draw insights and benefit from the vast amounts of data held by any number of government agencies. This can help advance e-government capabilities such as helping to reduce the cost of social services, improving efficiency and productivity, deterring fraud and abuse, improving citizen access to services, and enabling digital interaction between citizens and the public sector.

-        Smarter Cities – with initial focus on water and transportation: Rates of urbanization in Africa are the highest in the world.

[1] The single biggest challenge facing African cities is improving access to and quality of city services such as water and transportation. IBM, in collaboration with government, industry and academia, plans to develop Intelligent Operation Centers for African cities – integrated command centers – that can encompass social and mobile computing, geo-spatial and visual analytics, and information models to enable smarter ways of managing city services. The initial focus will be on smarter water systems and traffic management solutions for the region.

-        Human Capacity Development: A skills shortage is hindering the leadership and innovation of new industry in Africa. The IBM Research - Africa lab, while carrying out research, will help to elevate the level of ICT and related scientific skills in Kenya by working in collaboration with select universities, government agencies and companies. Boosting the innovation culture in Kenya and engaging local entrepreneurs and innovators in developing solutions that matter to the people of Kenya and the region may also assist in accelerating economic development.

 "IBM continues to expand its operations in key growth markets and we plan to lead the way by bringing Africa into our global network of IBM Research laboratories," said Dr. John E. Kelly III, IBM senior vice president and director of IBM Research. "We plan to work closely with leading African scientists and engineers from academia, government and industry to address some of their most pressing challenges and greatest opportunities."

Operations at IBM Research - Africa will commence immediately. Expansion into other parts of Africa may be considered in a second phase.

"In today's world, innovation is the main lever for a competitive national economy, is a source of employment, and has the potential to improve lives," said Dr. Bitange Ndemo, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information, Communication and Technology. "The IBM research lab, will not only rubber stamp Kenya as Africa's leader in ICT, but will help the country to transform into a knowledge based economy."

IBM Research Resident Scientist Program

The new lab will establish a Resident Scientist Program, an international recruitment program to reach Kenyan and other African applicants. The program will aim to attract top R&D talent to work side-by-side with IBM researchers in the lab.

The Resident Scientist candidates will be pre- and post-doctoral researchers including scientists and researchers from academia, government and industry. The Resident Scientists will begin with a one-year tenure with options for this to be extended.

Resident Scientists will be integrated into the IBM Research - Africa lab as well as IBM's global network of labs. Each Resident Scientist can collaborate with IBM researchers throughout IBM's global network of laboratories as they carry out their research.

IBM Investment in Africa

IBM is making a significant investment in Africa, the world's fastest growing region, ramping up its profile on the continent as part of its focus on emerging markets. The expansion program is part of a major business plan to increase IBM's presence in growth markets and support global strategy. The company is present in more than 20 African countries and recognizes the huge potential of research and smarter systems in transforming business, government and society across the continent.

"IBM has had a presence in Africa for more than 60 years and we are now taking our presence to a new level," said Anthony Mwai, Country General Manager, East Africa. "As we build a great workforce in Africa that is aligned with national goals and help governments and industries envision and build Africa's future, we are establishing a foundation for IBM's long-term success."

Alongside its day-to-day business of providing advanced technologies and services to clients in Africa, IBM has deployed an array of programs aimed at building economic capacity such as IBM's employee volunteer program, Corporate Service Corps, which is modelled on the U.S. Peace Corps. For example, IBM is working with the Postal Corporation of Kenya (PCK) to review the country's changing economic landscape and develop a plan to deliver financial services to rural areas.

IBM Research - Africa will join existing labs in Australia, Brazil, China, India, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Switzerland and the United States. IBM Research laboratories are credited with the creation of many of the foundations of information technology, including the invention of the relational database, disk storage, DRAM memory and much more. IBM Research has been recognized with five Nobel Prize Laureates, and many leading scientific and technical medals and awards. Recently IBM Research created a question-answering supercomputing system called Watson that defeated the champions of a major televised quiz show, showing its ability to match humans in answering a wide range of free text questions.

For more information, please visit www.research.ibm.com.

To join the social conversation include the hashtag #ibmresearch or #ibmafrica.

Registered journalists and bloggers can download b-roll and images about the lab opening at http://www.thenewsmarket.com/ibmafricalab.

[1] http://web.mit.edu/urbanupgrading/upgrading/case-examples/overview-africa/regional-overview.html#Anchor-47857