

## **IBM Research en Afrique et RTI International, partenaires pour un développement du continent axé sur les données**

**Un projet mené dans les écoles du comté de Mombasa au Kenya améliore la compréhension des enjeux éducatifs grâce à la technologie**

**Paris - 15 juil. 2015:** RTI International, un institut de recherche majeur à but non lucratif, et le laboratoire de recherche IBM en Afrique annoncent un partenariat pour déployer des technologies analytiques et cognitives afin de révolutionner les logiques de développement en Afrique et à travers le monde. Dans l'un de leur premier projet mené conjointement, IBM et RTI développent et testent des systèmes intelligents pour collecter les données de recensement concernant des écoles du comté de Mombasa au Kenya.

A travers ce partenariat, RTI et IBM Research en Afrique cherchent à étudier les façons d'utiliser des technologies de pointe pour collecter des données pertinentes dans des domaines tels que la santé, l'agriculture, la gestion de l'eau ou l'éducation. En s'appuyant sur la puissance du Big Data et de l'analytique, les chercheurs fournissent des informations clés aux gouvernements, aux ONG et aux organisations qui cherchent à prendre des décisions plus éclairées sur le développement et l'investissement tout en bénéficiant d'une visibilité accrue sur les résultats des actions menées.

*« La pénurie de données en Afrique a longtemps été la cause d'une incompréhension ou d'une mauvaise interprétation de l'histoire du continent, de sa performance économique et de son potentiel. Au cours des dernières décennies, les faits les plus simples tels que la taille d'un pays, sa performance économique, le taux de population vivant sous le seuil de pauvreté ou le volume de ressources exploitables ont été mal interprétés », explique **Kamal Bhattacharya, Vice Président IBM Research en Afrique**. « Les derniers avancements dans le domaine du mobile, du Big Data et dans les technologies de l'Internet des objets ont le potentiel pour changer la donne, et nous permettre d'avoir une compréhension réaliste et dynamique des enjeux en Afrique, des opportunités qui sont prometteuses et de l'incroyable potentiel du continent. »*

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## **RTI International and IBM Research - Africa forge partnership for data-driven development**

*Launch project in Mombasa County, Kenya using technology to improve understanding of educational challenges in schools*

**RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, N.C. and NAIROBI, Kenya - 15 Jul 2015:** RTI International - a leading nonprofit research institute - and IBM's (NYSE: [IBM](#)) Africa research lab have announced a partnership to deploy big data analytics and cognitive technologies to help transform development approaches in Africa and around the world. In one of the first projects, IBM and RTI are developing and testing intelligent systems to capture data about schools in Mombasa County, Kenya.

Through the partnership, RTI and IBM Research – Africa will explore ways of using advanced technologies to capture accurate data about challenges in areas such as healthcare, agriculture, water and education. Drawing on the power of big data analytics, researchers will provide insight to governments, aid agencies and other organizations who are looking to make more informed decisions about investment and development while having greater visibility of results.

*“A dearth of data on Africa in the past has led to misunderstandings or misrepresentations of the continent's history, economic performance and potential. Over the past few decades, even simple facts have been misrepresented - the size of a country, its economic performance, the amount of poor people, the volume of exploitable resources,” said [Dr. Kamal Bhattacharya](#), Vice President IBM Research – Africa. “The latest advances in mobile, big data and Internet of Things technologies have the potential to change that so that we have an accurate and dynamic understanding of Africa’s challenges, rising opportunities and incredible potential.”*

The partnership comes as a rapid rise in mobile and Internet of Things technologies are producing unprecedented amounts of data. In developing countries, mobile phones, digital devices and low-cost sensors connected to improving cellular networks are reaching previously disconnected communities with the potential to produce new insight about how people live and the challenges they face.

*“Rapid advancements in technology and open data initiatives mean more data is available now than ever before, offering significantly greater insights to improve lives through smarter development programs,” said [Aaron Williams](#), executive vice president at RTI. “By combining our expertise in data science and development, RTI and IBM will apply the information newly at our fingertips to accelerate improvements in literacy, respond rapidly to the spread of infectious diseases, and discover and apply new innovations for improving the human condition in the developing world.”*

## **Big Data for Education in Mombasa County**

In one of the first joint projects, RTI and IBM are developing and testing intelligent systems for data capture and decision support to improve accountability and transparency in more than 100 schools in Mombasa County, Kenya. The project is designed to support the Kenyan Ministry of Education Science and Technology data collection initiative.

Teachers, head teachers, school principals and administrators will be equipped with tablet devices to capture data about students, classrooms, and school resources. IBM and RTI scientists will use big data analytics and cognitive technologies to analyze the data and provide indicators that establish school profiles and progress and provide actionable recommendations about the county's education system at a granular level. The activity is part of the United States Agency for International Development's Education Data for Decision Making (EdData II) project.

*"In the past, head teachers, government officials and aid agencies across Sub-Saharan Africa have struggled to make informed decisions about how to invest in and improve education," said [Dr. Kommy Weldemariam](#), **Research Scientist, IBM Research - Africa**. "Often education data is incomplete, inaccurate and sometimes even deliberately misreported. Using analytics and cognitive technologies, we are creating a school census hub which will minimize the effort, expense and error in collecting valuable data about attendance, performance and resources at schools. It has the potential to completely change our understanding of the situation on the ground and what needs to be done to improve it and improve the outcomes for children."*

## **Achieving Sustainable Development Goals**

Applying insights and actionable evidence from data will be key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, ambitious universal targets that will be confirmed by a United Nations Summit in September 2015. They include ending poverty and hunger, ensuring healthy lives and ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education.

*"By adding analytical value and insight to data production, curation and integration, RTI and IBM will help lay the paving stones for the 'data revolution for development' to lead the way in achieving the sustainable development goals," said [Dr. Luis Crouch](#), **vice president and chief technical officer in RTI's International Development Group**, who has worked with various UN processes on the formation of these goals.*

The sustainable development goals raise numerous global challenges for which innovative data science solutions, such as predictive analytics, sifting of massive amounts of evidence, and more agile use of citizen-sourced information and citizen feedback could help provide solutions. For instance, in the education sector, initiatives can provide insight on building early childhood development programs that predicate success in later education and life; design early grade reading and math programs using the best instructional approaches and curricula; and inform policymakers on policies needed to support sustainable improvements in education and the data systems needed to track progress in systemic reform. In the health sector, initiatives can help track the spread of infectious diseases faster and more efficiently; provide a better understanding of the underlying causes of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and cancer; and improve the knowledge management, oversight and accountability needed to strengthen health systems.

## **About RTI**

RTI International, a leading nonprofit research institute with expertise ranging from laboratory sciences to international development, has more than 50 years of development experience worldwide. Specialties include global health, international education, governance and economic development. The Institute's work on more than 70 current development projects is supported by regional offices in Kenya, Indonesia and El Salvador.

### **About IBM Research - Africa**

IBM Research – Africa is IBM's 12th global research lab and the first industrial research facility on the continent of Africa. With facilities in Kenya and South Africa, IBM Research – Africa is driving innovation and socio-economic development by developing commercially-viable solutions to transform lives and enable new business opportunities in key areas such as water, agriculture, transportation, healthcare, financial inclusion, education, energy, security and e-government.

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