



# Working Together to Enable Innovation, Jobs & Opportunity

The mission of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) is to improve the living conditions of people and promote global prosperity, by offering tailor-made solutions for the sustainable industrial development of developing countries and countries with economies in transition. UNIDO has a special place in the United Nations system. It is the only organisation specifically targeting the creation of wealth through manufacturing industries, focusing on the small and medium enterprise sector, the key generator of employment in most developing countries.

Contributing to partnerships for development is a core part of corporate citizenship and an integral part of conducting responsible business. Microsoft's approach is competence-based, and rooted in the idea that by bringing the core resources, solutions, know-how and time of the company and its employees to the table, it can support its partners serving local needs and addressing global development challenges.

In July 2006, UNIDO and Microsoft established a partnership to pool expertise to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and to foster greater innovation and competitiveness.

The partnership recognises the importance of harnessing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to promote sustainable industrialisation throughout the developing world as a means of improving livelihoods in developing countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa.

The partnership focuses on promoting the development and growth of SMEs through the use of ICT, fostering the development of a local software economy and promoting e-business initiatives. UNIDO and Microsoft's work also seeks to facilitate SME access to quality hardware and software solutions in Africa, particularly in rural areas.





“The opening of the PC refurbishment centre in Kampala marks a major step forward for the economic opportunities available to SMEs, the majority of employers in Uganda. Access to affordable PCs will help SMEs increase their productivity, share information, grow their business, create local jobs and ultimately help make Uganda a more competitive, knowledge-based economy.”

Hon. Dr. Ham-Musaka Mulira,  
Minister of ICT of Uganda

**Making Computers Available to Entrepreneurs in Less Developed Countries**

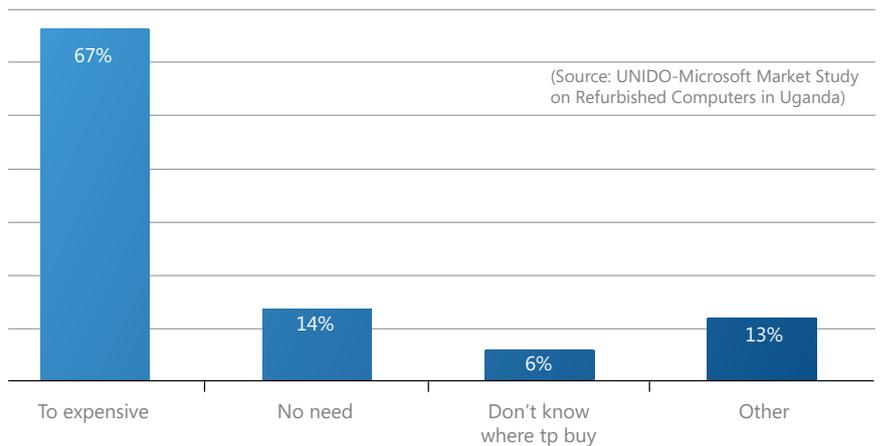
One of the key difficulties for SMEs in less developed countries is securing access to hardware and software to leverage the benefits of ICT. In order to address this need, and to extend the useful life of PCs, UNIDO and Microsoft are collaborating on a Refurbished Computer Initiative for SMEs in Uganda.

The partners joined forces to launch the Uganda Green Computer Company in June 2008, a computer refurbishment and ICT training centre based in Kampala.

The centre is a commercially and environmentally sustainable enterprise that supports the full life cycle of responsible PC refurbishment, providing affordable, quality PCs for re-sale to local SMEs. The Uganda Green Computer Company plans to disassemble hardware and reuse working components such as memory sticks, resell high-value components, locally recycle simple materials and work with regional or global recyclers to properly dispose of toxic substances. The first of its kind in Uganda, the centre will aim to refurbish 10,000 quality branded PCs per year, install genuine Microsoft Windows software and resell them at less than half the price of a new PC. The model is currently under pilot in Uganda with plans to expand it across the region.



**Reasons for not using computers.**



### Supporting Micro, Small and Medium Business

A key UNIDO initiative is the establishment of District Business Information Centres (DBICs) in developing countries to assist SMEs to access relevant market information over the Internet. Despite a driving business spirit, the growth and competitiveness of these enterprises is often hampered by a lack of technical training, business advisory services and access to relevant hardware and software. In this context, UNIDO is currently implementing a DBIC programme, also in Uganda. The Centres are aimed at providing integrated business information solutions to SMEs on a demand-driven basis to help their development. Eight centres have been established in various districts throughout rural Uganda.

An important focus of the DBICs is on income-generation by the SME business community through the provision of sustainable services such as ICT training and entrepreneurship development. DBICs offer entrepreneurs tailored training, fast and reliable access to the Internet to improve their efficiency and day-to-day business activities, and work closely with the Uganda Green Computer Company to provide access to hardware.

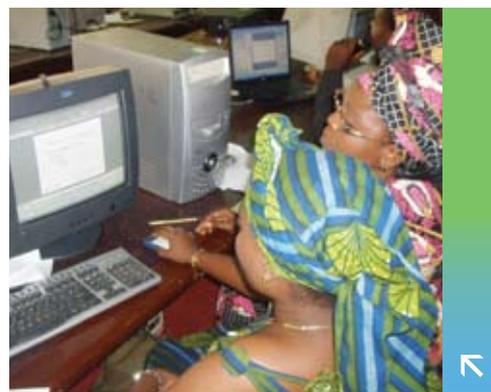
Microsoft's support of the centres is focused on developing relevant ICT-related services and training for the rural business community and awareness building on the benefits of ICT tools via its Digital Literacy programme and SME relevant training curriculum.

The DBIC programme was recognised by the 2007 Africa Investor Awards of Africa Investor Magazine, receiving the top award in the category "Best Initiative in Support of Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Development." The awards, now in their fourth year, recognise exceptional business practices, economic achievements, good corporate citizenship and investments in Africa in 16 categories. The judging panel included representatives from the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP).

### Promoting Local Software Economy

In September 2007, UNIDO, the Government of Uganda and Microsoft signed an agreement to cooperate on the development of a sustainable local software economy in Uganda over the next 12 months. Local software developers are encouraged to develop "localized software solutions." By fostering information and communication technology innovations and solutions, the partners aim to enhance the role that Ugandan software developers and ICT graduates can play in the country's economy.

A local Software Development Centre will be set up in which software solutions are offered, demonstrated and developed. The Centre will act as an incubator for innovations and solutions in IT by offering technology training (developer workshops, support centre, proof of concept lab) and industry skills transfers.



“Information and Communication Technology is a key development tool - it contributes to increased productivity and helps stimulating a competitive knowledge-based economy. More public-private partnerships are needed - such as the one we have established with Microsoft - to bring Africa closer to achieving the Millennium Development Goals”.

Director-General of UNIDO, Dr Kandeh K. Yumkella, commenting on the UNIDO partnership with Microsoft





### Driving Investment in Africa

UNIDO actively supports the improvement of the investment climate in Africa through its Africa Investment Promotion Agency Network (AfrIPANet) initiative. AfrIPANet assists policy-makers tailor their strategies to attract investment and private decision-makers to make sound and informed investment choices. Through the gathering of survey-based data on the behaviour and expectations of investors, sectoral growth, and the impact of different types of investors on host economies, AfrIPANet bridges the existing investment knowledge gap in Africa and provides a tool for evidence based policy advocacy.

UNIDO and Microsoft have established a partnership to craft an ICT tool that supports the work of national agencies like investment promotion agencies (IPAs) and provides better information to private sector investors. The Africa Investment Monitoring Platform is an innovative technology solution, hosting the database on a web-based interactive

portal that will provide detailed information on foreign investors and domestic enterprises in more than 20 countries in sub-Saharan Africa. IPAs will be able to monitor trends in investment flows, evaluate the effectiveness of interventions on investor behaviour and target and support quality investors.

Microsoft's major role in this initiative is to use its technology to establish a state-of-the-art interactive business platform that will increase transparency, information sharing and create synergies through the active involvement of all end users – companies, government agencies, development partners and civil society.

Twenty five countries are currently part of the network: Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.

“Give people the right tools, empower them with the right knowledge and provide them with the right opportunity and you’ll see them build their own futures. Our partnership with UNIDO is firmly rooted in this approach.”

Dr. Cheick Modibo Diarra, Microsoft Chairman for Africa

**Microsoft®**

