

## Key Outcomes and Highlights

*InfoDev's* 5th Global Forum on Innovation & Technology Entrepreneurship was held from May 28–30, 2013 in East London, South Africa, in partnership with the South African Department of Science and Technology and the Eastern Cape Province. Global and regional thought leaders, entrepreneurs, business incubator managers, policy makers and government representatives, financiers, local and international media, and development practitioners convened at this biennial flagship event to exchange know-how, establish partnerships and develop innovative approaches.

The energy and richness of the Global and African technology and entrepreneurship community was inspiring.

**Over 800 participants from 61 countries joined the Global Forum**

According to a post-Forum participant survey:

- **90%** of the participants rated the Global Forum as 'extremely valuable' or 'very valuable'.
- **44%** of the participants indicated that the Global Forum's learning and knowledge exchange was their most valuable takeaway.
- **25%** indicated the networking and partnership building as the second most attractive aspect of the Global Forum.
- **21%** said in addition to networking, they enjoyed the Dragons' Den business pitching competition.
- **20%** said they appreciated the engaging thematic sessions.

### Highlights of the Global Forum Included:

#### ✿ The Dragons' Den Pitching Competition

*InfoDev* assembled 50 high-potential entrepreneurs from every corner of the world. 20 of them were selected to face a jury of prominent financiers, angel investors, and donor representatives -the Dragons- to compete for a coveted position in the top five. These entrepreneurs -many of whom were women- pitched their innovative ideas over two days, displaying a diverse array of entrepreneurial talent to everyone in the audience. The top five winners went home with prizes, as well as a significant amount of media attention for their burgeoning enterprises. *InfoDev* will continue to assist the Top 20 entrepreneurs, and others alike, through its network of innovation hubs, accelerators and incubators.

#### ✿ An Entrepreneurs' Fair to Showcase South African Knowledge and Innovation Initiatives

The fair provided a platform for South African SMEs and startups to showcase their solutions and forge partnerships with potential investors during the Global Forum. It also offered entrepreneurs an opportunity to link them to potential global markets and financing.

#### ✿ New Partnership with AppCampus, a Mobile Application Accelerator Program

Nokia, AppCampus, and *infoDev* announced a move that will empower mobile innovation hubs across Africa, Asia and Latin America at the Global Forum. This new collaboration will offer financing and coaching for mobile app startups. 26 awards per year (ranging from US\$ 33,000 to US\$ 90,000) will be available for the best mobile innovation ideas via the mobile innovation hub network, starting with *infoDev's* mobile application labs in South Africa, Kenya, Armenia and Vietnam, as well as mobile application hubs in Egypt, Nigeria and Mexico.

The prize winners will be able to compete with other global firms at the AppCampus, in the hope that their application will be commercialized by one of the large mobile carriers. AppCampus was established in 2012 as a program managed by the Aalto University in Finland after receiving an 18 million joint investment by Nokia and Microsoft.

## ⚙️ Stream Sessions

Interactive Stream Sessions were held on **mobile innovation, agribusiness, green growth, financing innovation, innovation ecosystems, and women's entrepreneurship**. Each of the streams sparked engaging discussions among participants and *infoDev* representatives centered on the forum's theme of harnessing innovative entrepreneurship for social and economic growth.

- The **mobile innovation stream** sought to address emerging global trends for mobile developers and explore business models for serving markets at the base of the pyramid (BoP).
- The **agribusiness and green growth streams** explored the steps necessary to accelerate the development of inclusive green growth and sustainable agro-processing enterprises.
- The **innovation ecosystems stream** discussed multi-stakeholder collaboration models to explore and better construct innovation policy and practice.
- The **early-stage innovation financing stream** discussed new phenomena such as crowdfunding, micro-equity and other seed stage initiatives for entrepreneurs.
- The **women entrepreneurs' roundtable** detailed both the remarkable opportunities for women to cultivate high-growth businesses and also the numerous challenges they face.

## ⚙️ Tailor-Made Training Courses

Prior to the main conference, *infoDev* organized two full days of trainings that consisted of 12 modules, ranging from basic introductory topics designed for professionals new to business incubation, to specialized topics such as technology commercialization and agribusiness incubation services. In addition, extra training sessions such as an Internationalization Bootcamp for entrepreneurs and a Nokia-sponsored Windows Phone 8 training for developers took place during the weekend.

## ⚙️ Media Coverage

The Global Forum, including the launch of the *infoDev*-Nokia AppCampus partnership, led to over 55 reports in international and national media (in print, TV and radio). Social media interaction increased 300% in the months leading up to the Forum.

## Going Forward:

The Global Forum in South Africa showcased *infoDev*'s convening power among its global community of entrepreneurs and vast network of partners. *InfoDev* will continue to host a vibrant Global Forum as a platform to create opportunities for entrepreneurs to access what they value most: **learning, peer-to-peer knowledge-sharing, building partnerships and business linkages**, and greater access to **markets and financing**.

## More Information about the Global Forum and *infoDev*:

The presentations and videos of the Global Forum are available online:

<http://www.globalforum2013.co.za/programme.php>  
<http://info.dev.org/highlights/global-forum-innovation-and-entrepreneurship>

**Entrepreneurs Slaying Dragons in South Africa:**  
<http://blogs.worldbank.org/psd/node/13221>

infoDev Growing Innovation

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