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## **Why the world's technology giants are investing in Africa**

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Africa is booming, with growth of 5.6% predicted for 2013, according to the World Bank. The middle class in sub-Saharan Africa is expanding rapidly. With the seemingly unstoppable growth of the mobile phone, greater access to the internet, and an increase in access to education, change is happening, and more people have more disposable income to spend.

So it's no surprise that the big technology companies are investing in Africa:

### **IBM**

The company has bolstered existing investments in the continent by opening a research facility in Nairobi.

"The key thing is... the great growth story of Africa," says Dr Kamal Bhattacharya, the director of IBM Research - Africa.

"We know that financial inclusion is the big challenge. About 80% of the population has no access to financial services. There is the lack of access to energy, safe water, sanitation, food security.

"As scientists we believe that science and technology is enables you to express your needs, to shape your own future.

"And this is why IBM is making this very significant investment into Africa, starting with Kenya. We've hired some of the top talent from all over the world, people of African origin, also people who contribute to the growth of Africa, and we bring them all together here.

"We believe research for Africa, solving Africa's grand challenges, has to be done on the ground in Africa a. You can do research from anywhere. But you will miss the mark... In order to capture value, and deliver innovation that leads to commercially viable products that impact people's lives, we have to be here, in the local ecosystem."

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