

Microsoft in major push into Africa



By [Duncan McLeod](#)

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The software maker has partnered with China's Huawei to launch a low-cost, Windows Phone 8-powered smartphone in South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria and elsewhere as part of a broad new focus on the continent.

Microsoft is turning to Africa for future growth opportunities. As part of this new push, the US software giant and Chinese telecommunications equipment company Huawei are set to unveil a new, low-cost Windows Phone 8-powered smartphone aimed at the African market at events in Johannesburg, Abidjan, Lagos, Nairobi and Cairo on Tuesday [5 February 2013].

Late on Monday night, Microsoft announced a new project called the 4Afrika Initiative, under which it wants to get tens of millions of Windows Phone-based smart devices in the hands of young Africans; bring a million African small and medium-sized enterprises online; train 100 000 skills; and help an additional 100 000 recent graduates develop "employability skills", 75% of whom the company says it will help place in jobs.

The first step of the initiative involves the introduction of Huawei 4Africa, a Windows Phone 8 smartphone that will come preloaded with selected applications "designed for Africa". The phone will be available at launch in South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria, Morocco, Egypt, Angola and Côte d'Ivoire.

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Award-winning Duncan McLeod is the founder and editor of TechCentral (www.TechCentral.co.za, [@TechCentral](https://twitter.com/TechCentral)), South Africa's latest technology news site offering breaking news, in-depth analysis and opinion that launched in September 2009. Before that, he was associate editor at the *Financial Mail/FM*. Contact Duncan on email duncan@techcentral.co.za and follow him on Twitter at [@mcleodd](https://twitter.com/mcleodd).

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