

442 tech hubs active in Africa - GSMA

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22 Mar 2018

There are 442 spaces actively supporting tech startups across Africa, according to research by the GSMA Ecosystem Accelerator.



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The [new research](#) conducted by the GSMA Ecosystem Accelerator aims to quantify the number of “tech hubs” operating across Africa in 2018, including incubators, accelerators, co-working spaces, fab labs, makerspaces, hackerspaces, and other innovation centres.

Whereas the [previous edition](#) of the research – dating to 2016 – found 314 tech hubs on the continent, the new research finds 128 new spaces, bringing the total number of hubs to 442.

The leading country in Africa by number of hubs is South Africa with 59 active hubs, followed by Nigeria (55), Egypt (33), Kenya (30), and Morocco (25). Together, these five destinations account for over 45% of Africa’s tech hubs.



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The research also identifies a number of fast growth ecosystems, with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Zambia jointly topping the list at 200% growth each in their ecosystems between 2016 and 2018. Ivory Coast, Togo and Nigeria made up the top five quickest growing ecosystems.

The GSMA highlighted the increasingly important role of international tech giants and mobile operators in spurring the tech hub trend across Africa.

“The last couple of years have also been characterised by the rise of tech giants’ interest in the untapped opportunities of African markets. CEOs including Mark Zuckerberg (Facebook), Sundar Pichai (Google), and Jack Ma (Alibaba) visited major hubs from Lagos to Nairobi, corporate partnerships mushroomed and players including Amazon and Alibaba increased their presence all across the continent,” said Maxime Bayen and Dario Giuliani, co-authors of the report.

“Before them, established mobile operators have been extending their footprint in the two regions by launching their own incubation, acceleration or co-working spaces.”

Finally, the research also points to a high level of flux in the ecosystem, with numerous hubs shutting down over the period examined, but a substantially higher number opening their doors.

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