

To Train, Develop and Empower Young People

Orange Egypt and the German Development Cooperation inaugurate the 7th Orange Digital Center in Africa and the Middle East

Today, Orange and the German Development Cooperation are inaugurating, the 7th “Orange Digital Center” (ODC) in the heart of Cairo, an ecosystem highly dedicated to the development of digital skills and innovation to train young people in digital technology to enhance their employability. The event is attended by representatives of Germany and France, GIZ Egypt as the implementing partner and members of the board and Orange Group Executive Committee led by its Chairman and CEO, Stéphane Richard.

Following on from Tunisia, Senegal, Ethiopia, Mali, Côte d’Ivoire and Cameroon, it is in Egypt, in Cairo that this new Orange Digital Center is inaugurated.

The Orange Digital Center in Egypt brings together four strategic programs of the Orange Group, namely; a Coding School, a solidarity FabLab - one of the Orange Foundation's digital manufacturing workshops -, an Orange Fab start-up accelerator and Orange Ventures, the investment fund. Moreover, for the launch of ODC in Egypt, a new Seed Challenge dedicated to the local fintech start-up will reward two winners with 500k euros.

All of the programs of ODC are provided free-of charge and open to everyone. They range from digital training for young people, 90% of which are practical, start-up acceleration, guidance for project bearers and investment.

The network of Orange Digital Centers around the world allow experiences and expertise to be shared between countries and offer a simple and inclusive approach to improve young people's employability, encourage innovative entrepreneurship and promote the local digital ecosystem. In addition, Orange is working on installing this model in Egyptian universities to complement the education system and give as many people as possible access to new technologies and to connect them with the professional world.

Orange and the German Development Cooperation are working together as part of a development partnership within the develoPPP programme, which GIZ is implementing on behalf of the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The goal is to fulfil their shared vision of fostering youth employability while supporting sustainable growth and the country's digital transformation. The programme is also working to advance gender equality and inclusion by promoting access for women and girls to ICT jobs.

Through digital technology, this programme focuses on the following sustainable development goals in line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: (4) quality education, (5) gender equality, (8) decent work and economic growth, (9) industry, innovation and infrastructure, (10) reduced inequalities and (17) partnerships for goals.

Alioune Ndiaye, Chairman and CEO of Orange Middle East and Africa, says: "I am very proud to inaugurate the seventh Orange Digital Center today in Cairo. This new Orange Digital Center is part of a network of 32 Orange Digital Centers that will be deployed not only, in Africa and the Middle East, but also in Europe. The main objective is to democratize access to digital technology to young people - with or without qualifications - giving them access to the latest technological trends to strengthen their employability and prepare them for the jobs of tomorrow."

Stéphane Richard, Chairman and CEO of Orange, says: "Orange acts as a responsible company across its activities. This sense of responsibility is a central value that has been placed at the heart of the Group's strategic plan, Engage 2025. To promote digital services as a vector for inclusion and to ensure they are available to the widest possible audience, we aim to open an Orange Digital Center in every country in which we are present by 2025. This ambition clearly demonstrates our determination to harness the positive power of digital innovation."

Uwe Gehlen, Head of the German Development Cooperation in Egypt and First Counselor at the Embassy of the Federal German Republic in Egypt notes: "The project directly contributes to the digital transformation of Egypt while improving job opportunities of the young population. Germany is supporting Egypt in regard to technical education in many different ways. This project with a private sector entity is one important example of our strong commitment to the Egyptian youth."

Dr Alexander Solyga, Country Director at GIZ Egypt says: "Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and Orange share a vision of development and improvement of the socio-economic framework of Egypt. The partnership contributes to the achievement of the United Nations' "Sustainable Development Goals" (SDGs) and to the digital transformation of Egypt ultimately improving job opportunities of the young population."

Elizabeth Tchoungui, Executive Director of CSR, Diversity and Philanthropy at Orange, Deputy Chair of the Orange Foundation adds: "This great project is a key step in our societal responsibility for digital inclusion, especially for young people and women. The solidarity FabLab, a key program of the Orange Foundation, is an essential building block of this socially useful action, by allowing beneficiaries without access to digital tools to reconnect with the professional world: the beginning of a beautiful journey that, through the development of technical skills and through the complementarity of the systems deployed, goes up to the creation of businesses."

Noel Chateau, Chief Transformation & Operational Efficiency Officer at Orange Egypt, adds: "Orange Egypt's commitment to digital transformation is a reality, and as a partner supporting Egypt's Vision for 2030, we are proud of launching this initiative which is a key step in our societal responsibility for digital inclusion. The Orange Digital Center will welcome thousands of young Egyptian talents, allowing them to develop their digital skills, projects or startups, making a significant impact in the society."

The guiding principle behind the various components of the project is to build synergies and create a holistic experience in which youth acquire digital knowledge, are offered the chance to apply it in the form of projects and potential business endeavours, and eventually capitalise on its economic rewards either through obtaining improved employment opportunities or launching new business ventures.