

# IFC and the IBM International Foundation

## Reducing Poverty Together



### PARTNERSHIP OVERVIEW

Over the last 10 years, IBM has been one of the largest contributors to non-profit organizations and educational institutions around the world. Its recent partnership with IFC proves IBM no less a philanthropist and all the more a leader in breaking down technological and financial barriers for small businesses.

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The IBM International Foundation's partnership with IFC will provide a free on-line service for small and medium-sized enterprises in India, Brazil, and South Africa. Other areas of opportunity for future partnership between IBM and the IFC include information and communication technology, education, small and medium enterprises, and gender entrepreneurship markets.

## RECENT HIGHLIGHT

### Breaking Down Business Barriers by Providing Technological Resources

In September 2006, IBM and IFC partnered on a major initiative to design and build a new business management platform, which will deliver interactive tools, on-line collaboration, and educational content for small businesses in the developing world, as well as for women- and minority-owned businesses in the United States.

Since access to best practice and business management tools is a significant barrier to the growth and sustainability of small and medium enterprises in developing countries, IBM's contribution to support the SME Toolkit will give small businesses access to state-of-the-art information and communication technologies in developing countries.

The SME Toolkit is a free on-line program that provides information and communication technologies to help small businesses in emerging markets learn and implement sustainable business management practices. IBM's commitment will build the Toolkit platform in order to improve usability and performance, provide enhanced functionality and create a resource hub, learning location, and meeting place for small and medium businesses.

The SME Toolkit is a way to accelerate economic development and job growth in geographies and communities not yet engaged in the market economy as well as to help spur development of women- and minority owned- businesses in the U.S.

Tools on the site address needs in the areas of: accounting and finance, business planning, human resources, legal and insurance, marketing and sales, operations, and technology.

The two companies also will jointly develop new partnerships using the Toolkit targeted at small enterprises in India, Brazil, and South Africa. IBM will also design tools on the site that are specifically focused on women- and minority-owned businesses in the U. S.