

The logo for Meraka Institute. The word "meraka" is written in a bold, grey, sans-serif font. A blue play button icon is positioned above the letter 'a'. Below "meraka", the word "INSTITUTE" is written in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font, with each letter spaced out.

meraka  
I N S T I T U T E

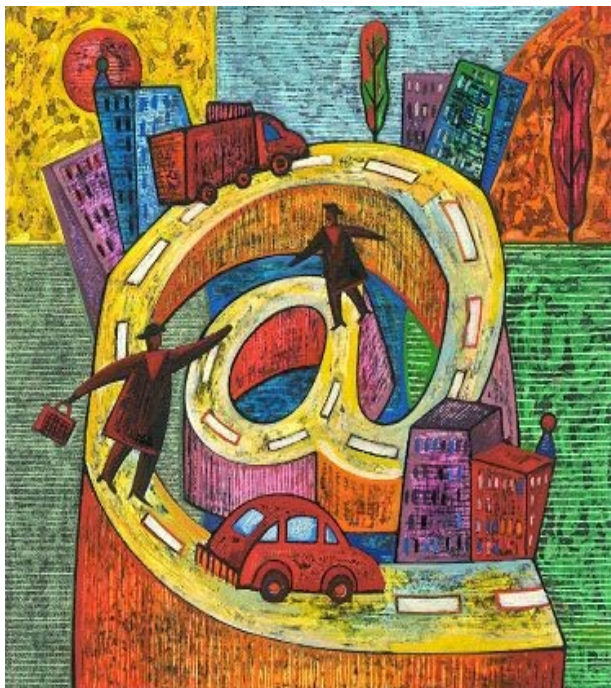
African Advanced Institute for Information  
& Communications Technology

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***PEOPLE – RESEARCH - INNOVATION***

A decorative graphic in the bottom-left corner consisting of a blue grid pattern that curves and tapers towards the bottom-left corner.

# Meraka Institute



- The Meraka Institute derives its mandate from President Mbeki's 2002 State of the Nation Address as a national strategic intervention in the South African ICT R&D and Innovation space
- Collaborative initiative driven by government with private sector, higher education and civil society
- The Meraka Institute will develop world class *human and intellectual capital* for the benefit of the *economy* and to improve the *quality of life* of the people of South Africa and the Continent by undertaking and facilitating world class, needs-based research and innovation in ICT

# Meraka Research Drivers

- **Technology Research** - Build critical mass in ICT research nationally to create world class ICT research activities and initiatives with a stronger research focus than application focus, e.g.
  - Human Language Technology
  - Remote Sensing Research
  - ICT for Earth Observation
  - High Performance Computing (CHPC)
- **Application Innovation** - ICT R&D and Innovation for socio economic development focussed on specific socio-economic challenges
  - Outcomes – new technology, platforms, and applications that address improved quality of life
  - Specific focus on broadening access and the creation of an inclusive information society
  - Sustainability addressed through pilots and development of replication models with partners

# Potential areas of collaboration

- Extending the reach of ICT infrastructure
  - Wireless Africa: Wireless mesh and community networks
  - Digital Doorway: Robust, public access terminals for computer literacy
- Enabling the inclusive use of ICTs
  - ICTs for persons with disabilities
  - Open Source Software
  - Human Language Technologies
- Supporting development priorities through ICTs:
  - Education: MobilED mobile learning
  - Health: Rural telehealth
  - Small business: Rural ICT entrepreneurs
  - Children: Creating safe environments (virtual) for vulnerable children

# The Living Lab approach

- An innovation environment for creation, prototyping, validating and testing of new services, products and systems in “real-life” context.
- Enable collaboration between researchers, government, industry and local community
- Facilitate local (community) innovations



# Example: Moutse

- Rural town close to Groblersdal in Sekhukhune district of Limpopo, South Africa
- Interesting case of achieving success in dealing with HIV/AIDS
- Living Lab established as initial partnership between Elandsdoorn Community Trust, Meraka Institute and Intel
- After first baseline study, establish an infrastructure to enable data collection – community wireless network and appointed community champions
- Introduce and develop technologies, services and applications relevant to local needs
- Conduct ongoing monitoring and evaluation

# Thank you!

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