Graduation of the Inaugural Cohort from the Interactive Digital Center, a Collaboration between USAID, Mohammed VI Polytechnic University, Agency for Digital Development, EON Reality and Other Partners

The Interactive Digital Center (IDC Morocco) developed through a partnership with both local and international participants provides access to Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) technologies for the region.

Benguerir, Morocco, December 14, 2020 – Mohammed VI Polytechnic University (UM6P) hosted today the graduation ceremony for students of the first cohort from the Academy of Interactive Digital Center (IDC Morocco).

The center provides training that leverages advanced Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) technologies to give students hands-on expertise—with the help of headsets, smartphones, and high-tech equipment to immerse themselves and develop programs able to replicate interactive environments for industries such as mining, aerospace, automotive, and medical services.

The ceremony was a great opportunity to recognize the amazing work accomplished by the students in the IDC Morocco's first cohort who successfully completed their training program despite the challenging health restrictions due the COVID-19 pandemic.

Inaugurated in February 2020, IDC Morocco is the outcome of a collaboration between UM6P, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Moroccan Agency for Digital Development (ADD) and EON Reality, a world leading company in Augmented and Virtual Reality-based knowledge and skills transfer for industry and education, with the support of the Moroccan Ministry of Industry, Trade , Green and Digital Economy, the Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research, and Mohammed V University (UM5).

IDC Morocco contributes to the unprecedented access to AR and VR technology in the region and represents a great example of how to bring government, international donors, academia, and the private sector, to work hand-in-hand toward promoting innovative learning solutions in order to advance industry ecosystems in Morocco, support the digital transformation and improve the educational outcomes of youth, the future leaders of Morocco.

Speaking at the ceremony, **Hicham El Habti, UM6P President** said : *«The passion, talent and concrete achievements presented today by our first cohort can only comfort us in the ambition that has led UM6P, with all its partners, to believe in Virtual Reality as an important lever within our portfolio of innovative tools to contribute to reinvent the classical learning methods in Morocco and Africa .»*

U.S. Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission Mr. David Greene congratulated the graduates of the IDC Morocco for their *"impressive work that shows us all that the future lies in the hands of our*

youth and is indeed very bright!" He also thanked the partners and wished *"for this partnership to continue to flourish and expand to make the outlook for Morocco's workforce brighter!"*

"The IDC Morocco contributions are already apparent through events like this graduation, despite certain aspects of it being changed due to COVID-19. We look forward to continuing to see the next generation graduate from our VR Innovation Academies and bring their skills with them to transform local, regional, and global economies," said Dan Lejerskar, Founder of EON Reality.

Furthermore, guests listened to speakers such as **Ms.Khouloud ABEJJA, in charge of Digital Transformation Direction, in the Agency for Digital Developmen**t who said:*"This year has seen the launch of the VR Innovation Academy's first cohort with the participation of 30 students. Moreover, the pandemic crisis had no impact on the courses, nor on the student's motivation, as they showed commitment, perseverance and were able to succeed in the challenge of continuing virtual training during the lockdown period. Today they celebrated their success and the culmination of their efforts materialized by the innovative projects they were able to develop."*

This was followed by a tour, a hands-on demonstration of the 3D technologies, and virtual programs developed by the inaugural cohort from the IDC Morocco.

About EON Reality
EON Reality is the world leader in Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) skills and knowledge transfer for industry and education. Since 1999, EON Reality has developed the de-facto standard for AR and VR academic and enterprise training software that supports devices from mobile phones to large immersive domes. EON Reality's global app development network has created the world's leading AR/VR library for education and workforce training with over 8,000 applications, downloaded by over 40 million people worldwide.
For further information, visit www.eonreality.com

About USAID
USAID is an independent United States federal government agency that receives overall foreign policy guidance from the U.S. Secretary of State. USAID supports international development and advances U.S. foreign policy objectives by supporting economic growth, agriculture and trade, global health, democracy and conflict mitigation and management; and humanitarian assistance in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, North Africa and Arabian Peninsula, Asia and the Near East, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Europe and Eurasia.
For further information, visit www.usaid.gov

About Mohammed VI Polytechnic University
Mohammed VI Polytechnic University is a hub of education, research, innovation and entrepreneurship, aspiring to become a solid bridge of knowledge between Morocco, Africa and the world. Located in the "Mohammed VI Green City" in Benguerir, near Marrakech, UM6P applies a "learning by doing" approach and develops sound partnerships with world-wide class universities, to promote leadership and training in focused research areas. By contributing to the

training of a new generation of researchers, entrepreneurs and leaders, UM6P is committed to positioning Morocco and Africa at the forefront of technology and human Sciences.

About Agency for Digital Development

The Agency for Digital Development (ADD) has been created under the law number 61-16. It is a strategic public institution endowed with legal personality and financial autonomy. Placed under the supervision of the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Green and Digital Economy, the Agency is in charge of executing Morocco's strategy in digital development and promoting the use of digital tools among its citizens.

ADD is responsible for various transversal missions, as an institutional actor, aiming to structure the digital ecosystem and enhance solid operators in the digital economy. The Agency contributes to the upgrade of digital administration and ensures closer ties with citizens and companies, supports industry 4.0, enhances social change through training, encourages social and entrepreneurial innovation and guarantees a responsible, sustainable digital inclusion. For further information, visit www.add.gov.ma