



Welcome to the AI4PEP bi-weekly News Brief.

This week we bring you some exciting updates from Team Africa: **Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, South Africa, & Senegal.**

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### Call for Proposals! (Science for Africa Foundation)

- Prof. Kong invited Prof. Ayana to share some information about an open call for proposals. He proceeded to provide a general overview of the call. <https://scienceforafrica.foundation/funding/call-applications-epidemic-science-leadership-and-innovation-networks>. He mentioned that the essence of the call was:
  - i) **epidemiological leadership science leadership and innovation network.**
  - He explained that for starters, it was important to note that the call was looking for a **consortium**, & it sought to support an emerging generation of scientist (which **entailed a component of mentorship**).
  - ii) The call was looking at **3-5 institutions** (in the case of Africa, there were 5 institutions-which was aligned with the requirements of the call).
  - The comprehensive budget was around 5 million and there was a webinar on the 6<sup>th</sup> of December 2023.

### Cameroon

- The team just launched their project on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November, 2023. A couple notables attended the event. E.g the Deputy Vice Chancellor, the Governor of the region, Key Traditional leaders, delegates of health, environment, and animal husbandry, groups that performed a skit, and the student's choir, students, members of the community, faculty. The university administration, alongside the Principal Investigator Dr. Nsagha had an opportunity to be interviewed by the local media. The Afro Hun was also invited (a network of universities working on One Health) Forum.
- Prof. Nsangha further mentioned that the team had successful presentations at the Yaounde Forum where they spotlighted the project. The posters were further presented at the Once Health Forum.
- The team hosted a Community Engagement Dialogue at the Molyko Health Area.

- The team did a survey on health and digital technology, and it attracted 100 participants. The survey revealed some striking results and willingness of the community to use digital health services. The survey was meant to assess the readiness of the users for the launch that DigiCare is meant to launch in coming months.



## Senegal

- Prof. Ayan urged the fellow cohort members to prepare questions they could ask the panel and later convene to discuss and brainstorm on the call. Prof. FAYE reported that he was away in Montreal attending a conference on living ethics on Global Health.
- The team was also represented by Prof. Mouhamadou Lamine BA at the High-level panel on Africa Universities Day (8<sup>th</sup> December) Focusing on Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education.”
- The team led by its Principal Investigator, Prof. Sylvian Faye had an opportunity to travel to the UNESCO Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland to deliver a report on the AI Ethics Readiness Assessment Report for Senegal.
- The team submitted that a team member by the name of Ndiaye DIA (also the Project’s AI Expert) had led the SALTIS 2023 (14<sup>th</sup> -15<sup>th</sup>

November 2023), which was the International Exhibition for Algorithms, science, Technology, and Innovation. This event was held in partnership with the Institute of Algorithms of Senegal (IAS). The event also offered Prof. Mouhamadou an opportunity to present a poster & also offer a keynote address.



The banner for the SALTIS 2023 event features a central graphic of a person's head profile filled with digital data and icons. The text 'SALTIS 2023' is prominently displayed in the center. To the right, it reads 'SALON INTERNATIONAL DES ALGORITHMES, DES SCIENCES, TECHNOLOGIES ET DE L'INNOVATION DU SÉNÉGAL'. The top left corner includes logos for IAS, the French Embassy in Senegal, PNUD, and the Institute of Algorithms of Senegal. The top right corner features the 'Saltis AI EVENT' logo. The bottom of the banner lists various partner organizations including GalsenAI, orange, sonatel, LE TECH OBSERVATEUR, AGES, MINISTRE DE LA COMMUNICATION DES TECHNOLOGIES DE L'ÉCONOMIE NUMÉRIQUE, SOCIALNETLINK, GAN DESIGN, DESIGN, WIMLDS, TAWFEKH TECH, and Sénégal numérique.

## Ethiopia

- Congratulations to Team Ethiopia on successfully leading a collective paper on behalf of the entire cohort **“Decolonizing AI Governance: Assessment of the State of Decolonized AI Governance in Sub-Saharan Africa.”**
- The team reported that they had been analyzing historical data from the Ethiopian public Health Institute, where they were trying to learn from the processing tools and integrating data for the past 5-7 years, and it was meant to inform the pre-analysis. The team AFP Surveillance, trends, and gaps and the way forward regarding the integration of Artificial Intelligence.
- The team also reported that they were working on another paper about the **“Epidemiological Trends and Clinical Features of Polio in Ethiopia.”**





- The team also had a successful internal bi-weekly meeting where they took major decisions regarding the type of data that they seek to mobilize to inform their analysis (both conventional and unconventional data). The team decided to go with three types of data namely, clinical data, PCR data and AFP data. They also met with the CORE group to understand the data that they will be generating.
- The team continued with their field work visits to several community centers in the Jimma Zone.
- The team went on and reported that their recruitment process had concluded with the identification of two talented female students who had since joined the project, making an addition to the female members of the team (now at 40%).
- One of the team members (Dessaegn) had a chance to travel to Japan on a JICA supported trip, where he had a chance to receive training for two

### South Africa

- Congratulations to Team South Africa on reaching a major milestone in their project! The team reported that they had produced a final prototype of the AI-r that is cost-effective and locally made (South Africa).
- The team also received a small grant from the University, and it has really helped with putting in place some of the necessary technology.
- The Air Quality Monitoring process was still on-going, this was meant to understand the concentration of pollutants in the air in Johannesburg next to the roads, as well as mine dumping sites.
- The team was working on two papers that would likely be finalized by the end of January 2024.
- The team also received an invitation to join a high-level panel at the EU Commission on Digital Transformation in South Africa. Such opportunities continue to spotlight the thought leadership of our team. Congrats Prof. Mellado and Team!

Major milestone fulfilled by technical team

The final production prototype of the AI\_r system has been manufactured and tested

This system will reduce the price of the AI\_r hardware by a factor of 2.5 and will render rolling the system out in large numbers feasible

