Compute Unlocked: Voices from Africa's AI Infrastructure Frontier

Resources for Today, Foundations for Tomorrow

AI Hub for Sustainable Development

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Preface

These stories belong to Africa, and to the Group of Seven (G7) partners who believed in this work before the outcomes existed to prove it.

The Compute & Talent Acceleration Programme was made possible by an extraordinary coalition of partners whose contributions went far beyond the resources they provided. CINECA opened access to world-class supercomputing infrastructure, making frontier compute available to innovators who would otherwise have remained excluded from it. Microsoft and AWS provided the cloud resources that enabled startups to experiment, train, deploy and scale. Their combined partnership with AI Hub for Sustainable Development to re-imagine partnerships with the private sector created more than access to technology. It created the conditions for innovation, collaboration and long-term ecosystem growth, one in which Africa's private sector is building new pathways towards sustainable development.

We are equally grateful to the members of the Executive Steering Group and the Private Sector Advisory Group of the AI Hub for Sustainable Development, whose guidance ensured that this programme was designed not only to unlock resources for today but to build the foundations for tomorrow. Their steady counsel shaped every significant decision this programme made.

The Mattei Plan for Africa, launched by the Italian Government, has been the driving force behind the partnership architecture that made all of this possible, creating spaces for collaboration that are concrete, co-owned and built for long-term value. It is a model of partnership that the world needs more of.

The G7 Digital and Technology Ministerial Declaration, adopted in May 2026, Paris, under the French G7 Presidency, affirms that G7 partners will continue to align their efforts through the AI Hub for Sustainable Development.

The international recognition this work has earned reflects the significance of what has been built together. The G7 Digital and Technology Ministerial Declaration, adopted in May 2026, Paris, under the French G7 Presidency, affirms that G7 partners will continue to align their efforts through the AI Hub for Sustainable Development. The AI Hub was launched during the Italian G7 Presidency with the aim of deepening partnerships with Africa to accelerate artificial intelligence (AI) adoption, expand computing and infrastructure, and support startup growth. That affirmation, coming at this moment and in these pages, is not incidental. It is a signal that the approach this programme pioneered – grounded in demonstrated demand, private sector partnership and African ownership – is one the world's leading economies recognise as the right direction of travel.

To every mentor, technical expert, ecosystem partner and institution that contributed time, expertise and belief to this effort: thank you. What has been accomplished reflects the work of a community far larger than any single organization.

But above all, these stories belong to the innovators. All 130 of them were ready long before we arrived.

Introduction

A year ago in June 2025, the AI Hub for Sustainable Development and its partners published the interim report, *Unlocking Compute in Africa* examining one of the most significant constraints facing artificial intelligence (AI) development across the continent: access to affordable and sustainable compute. The report highlighted Africa's growing demand for computational infrastructure, the opportunity to strengthen local AI capacity, and the need for more accessible, affordable and energy-efficient digital resources.

The insight carried a simple implication. If access to compute expanded, what opportunities could African innovators unlock?

To help answer that question, the AI Hub for Sustainable **Development launched the Compute & Talent Acceleration Programme in 2025**. Announced in Rome, Italy, through an initiative endorsed by the Group of Seven (G7) and aligned with key international and regional priorities, including the Italy–Africa Mattei Framework, the UNDP Strategic Plan 2026–2029 and the African Union Continental Artificial Intelligence Strategy, the programme sought to expand access to compute while generating practical evidence about what that access could unlock.

Over the past year, the AI Hub and its partners have translated the findings of *Unlocking Compute in Africa* into action. Compute resources were deployed against demonstrated demand, reaching founders, researchers, institutions and infrastructure builders working across a diverse range of sectors and geographies. At the same time, the programme sought to contribute to a broader objective: helping to lay the foundations for a more accessible, affordable and energy-aware compute ecosystem across Africa.

What follows is an early account of what emerged from that effort.

Since the Programme's launch, innovators have used compute to train language models, build products serving farmers and health workers, secure commercial partnerships, develop new infrastructure and create capabilities that did not previously exist.

The stories in these pages bring together the experiences, lessons and outcomes that emerged when access to compute reached innovators already working to solve problems, build companies and deploy technologies across the continent.

These solutions provide an early answer to a question at the heart of Unlocking Compute in Africa: what becomes possible when access to compute begins to catch up with the talent, ambition and entrepreneurial energy that already exists across Africa?

Chissola Marlene Neto Manuel | Angola | Green Future with African AI

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Mr Solomon Quaynor, Vice President for Private Sector, Infrastructure and Industrialization - **African Development Bank**

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AI Hub for Sustainable Development

UNDP

Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy

Mattei Plan for Africa

Mário Neves Gonçalo Chilundo | Mozambique | Dreaming Tomorrow in Rural Mozambique

Statements

Italy-Africa Mattei Partnership Framework

Hon. Adolfo Urso | Minister of Enterprises and Made In Italy

The Mattei Plan for Africa is built on a simple conviction: the strongest and most enduring partnerships are those capable of creating shared value, as demonstrated by the experience of the Compute & Talent Acceleration Programme within the AI Hub for Sustainable Development. Through CINECA, Italy's supercomputing consortium, together with Microsoft, AWS and UNDP, we have made cutting-edge technological resources available to African innovators, enabling them to tackle some of the continent's most significant challenges. What followed was not merely incremental progress, but a true qualitative leap. The experiences presented in these pages demonstrate that this approach to partnership delivers tangible results. Italy's scientific capacity, combined with African talent and the commitment of the private sector, has generated outcomes that none of the parties could have achieved on their own. They are the product of a co-investment model in which Africa develops, leads and enhances its own solutions. We are committed to strengthening these partnerships even further and to ensuring that the Mattei Plan for Africa continues to create the conditions necessary for this model to grow, consolidate and generate an ever broader and more lasting impact.

H.E. Ambassador Philip Thigo | Special Envoy on Technology, for H.E the President of the Republic of Kenya

Africa does not lack vision, talent, or ambition when it comes to artificial intelligence – what has too often been missing are the conditions, the compute, the connectivity, the institutional frameworks, and the financing that allow that ambition to translate into sovereign, locally-driven solutions. Kenya has been at the forefront of demonstrating what becomes possible when those conditions begin to align. As Africa's digital economy accelerates, the question is no longer whether AI will shape our public systems, markets, and institutions – it will – but whether African countries will be active architects of that transformation or passive recipients of systems designed elsewhere. Kenya's leadership, anchored in the work of the AI Hub for Sustainable Development, is helping to shift that equation: building the foundations for African agency in AI, not just African adoption of it, and that is the investment that will matter most in the decade ahead.

UNDP: Keeping people at the centre of AI adoption and diffusion

Robert Opp | Chief Digital Officer, UNDP

AI is already entering public systems, markets and everyday services, often faster than the institutions, infrastructure and governance arrangements needed to shape how it is used. This report uses compute as a practical entry point, but the development question is broader. It asks whether people, communities and countries have the agency to direct AI adoption and diffusion towards public value, local opportunity and their own development priorities. The stories that follow show what becomes possible when access to a critical resource expands. African innovators needed compute power to train models in African languages, reach farmers and health workers, strengthen developer platforms, create new commercial opportunities and build elements of the infrastructure on which future AI systems will depend. These examples matter because people centred AI will not be delivered by technology alone.

It will depend on the ecosystems around adoption, including the talent, data systems, governance, institutions, infrastructure and partnerships that allow local innovators and public institutions to shape how AI is used. UNDP's role is to help build those conditions, so AI expands choice, strengthens resilience and creates value for the people and communities it is meant to reach.

Agostino Inguscio | UNDP Italy

When the AI Hub for Sustainable Development was conceived during Italy's G7 Presidency, the underlying question was not simply whether artificial intelligence could help address development challenges but more like if it was whether the conditions for AI to be genuinely useful could be built where they were most needed. In this context, compute access, local talent, relevant data, and institutional capacity are not secondary concerns. They are the foundations without which the potential of AI remains out of reach for the communities it is meant to serve.

Italy and UNDP share a conviction that closing this gap requires more than political declarations. It requires patient, practical partnership work: connecting public finance with private capability, translating high-level commitments into concrete resources, and ensuring that innovators on the ground have what they need to build solutions that reflect their own contexts and priorities. The Compute and Talent Acceleration Programme is a direct expression of that conviction.

UNDP Administrator Alexander De Croo's visit to Rome in February 2026, and the engagements it enabled with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy, and Cassa Depositi e Prestiti, were a reflection of that same logic. Both sides explored how Italian technology, blended finance, and private sector partnerships can help close the gap between the rapid expansion of AI supply and the capacity of communities to benefit from it on their own terms. This brief is part of that ongoing work.

I am excited that UNDP-Italy platform is innovating new partnership paradigms, one in which private sector has a critical role to play in keeping people at the centre.

G7 Compute Partners: Microsoft, CINECA and Amazon

Brad Smith | Vice Chair and President, Microsoft Corporation

You can't build an AI economy without access to compute. That is what makes this effort so important. The AI Hub's Compute & Talent Acceleration Programme offers an early glimpse of what happens when infrastructure, investment, and local ambition begin to align. Across Africa, innovators are already putting compute to work by training language models, improving health and agricultural systems, and laying the groundwork for a digital economy. The work is rooted in local realities but shaped for global reach. What's taking shape is not just technological progress, but new paths for growth, resilience, and participation in the global economy. Microsoft is proud to support this work alongside the AI Hub and its partners, helping expand access to compute and strengthen more responsible, energyaware, and locally driven AI ecosystems. Our goal is to ensure that the benefits of AI are not concentrated in a few places, but shared more widely.

Francesco Ubertini | President, CINECA

The results highlighted in this report demonstrate what can be achieved when advanced computing infrastructures are combined with talent, vision and strong international partnerships. Through the AI Hub for Sustainable Development and the Compute & Talent Acceleration Programme, CINECA has been proud to make Europe's world-class supercomputing resources accessible to African innovators working on challenges with tangible social and economic impact. These achievements have been made possible thanks to a shared commitment involving institutions, governments, industry and international organizations. In particular, the support of the Italian Government has been instrumental in creating the conditions for meaningful and long-term collaboration. We believe that access to computing power, skills and scientific infrastructures is a strategic enabler for inclusive innovation. The experiences documented here show that, when these resources are made available through trusted partnerships, they can generate sustainable growth, strengthen local ecosystems and create opportunities that extend far beyond technology itself.

David Zapolsky | Chief Global Affairs and Legal Officer, Amazon

The AI Hub for Sustainable Development, established by the Italian Government, the G7, and UNDP, represents exactly the kind of public–private collaboration Amazon believes in. When we committed cloud resources to this initiative we knew that founders across Africa, given access to the right infrastructure, would build products the world needs. One hundred and thirty innovators across 18 countries have done exactly that – training language models in local languages, deploying crop disease detection reaching millions of farmers, and delivering maternal healthcare at scale. Amazon is committed to making compute accessible, affordable, and available for the next generation of builders, wherever they are.

Acknowledgements

Keyzom Ngodup Massally | Director, AI Hub for Sustainable Development and Head of Digital and AI Programmes, UNDP

The Compute & Talent Accelerator Programme was built on a simple premise: AI's direction is not predetermined. Whether it expands people's choices, strengthens local institutions, and builds lasting capability depends on practical decisions being made right now – about who accesses compute, where infrastructure is built, and whether partnerships generate real local value. The private sector's role here is not as a supplier to new markets but as a co-builder of the conditions that make adoption meaningful.

Our goal at the AI Hub for Sustainable Development is to ensure resources reach the builders already solving real problems, connect them to the partnerships they need, and keep the people and institutions with the most at stake at the centre of decisions shaping Africa's AI future.

This report is the product of many hands. Our lead authors and contributors: Raiyan Arshad, Garikai Nhongo, Dwayne Carruthers, Romilly Golding, Gituku Ngene, Amanda Umutoni, Maria Giulia Vitagliano, Mohamed Kais Dhaoui, Xiuzhen Li, Alexander Hradecky, and Jennifer Louie, each contributed deep conviction and distinct expertise across research, writing, review, and design. The wider AI Hub team's work is what this report ultimately documents – their contribution extends well beyond this publication and this programme.

1 Outcomes from the Compute & Talent Accelerator Programme

Before the Compute & Talent Acceleration Programme committed a single graphics processing unit (GPU) hour, it started with a practical challenge: what would it take to make compute genuinely accessible to African innovators?

The findings of *Unlocking Compute in Africa* made clear that access was not constrained by a single bottleneck. Innovators faced a combination of barriers: limited availability of high-performance infrastructure, high costs, fragmented access pathways, and few opportunities to choose the resources best suited to their needs. The problem was not simply a shortage of compute; it was a shortage of accessible, affordable and appropriate compute.

The programme's response was deliberately straightforward: supply what was missing, while learning what genuinely useful access looked like for each innovator. Rather than directing founders towards a single provider or infrastructure model, the programme created multiple pathways through partnerships with CINECA, the Italian supercomputing consortium, Microsoft, and AWS. Together, these partners combined high-performance computing infrastructure, cloud-based resources and early-stage experimentation environments, allowing innovators to access the resources most appropriate to their stage of development and technical requirements.

The programme's response was deliberately straightforward: supply what was missing, while learning what genuinely useful access looked like for each innovator.

Those resources reached approximately 130 innovators across 18 countries, working across sectors ranging from health, agriculture and education to financial services, climate intelligence, African-language AI and compute infrastructure itself. The portfolio reflected the

Compute Curious

supported more than 100 startups, researchers and institutions at earlier stages of development, helping them experiment, build technical capabilities and prepare for future growth.

Compute Ready

brought together approximately 20 advanced-stage ventures already building and deploying AI solutions with clear pathways to scale. These innovators received intensive support and account for many of the stories featured in this publication.

belief that compute is a foundational resource whose impact extends far beyond any single sector or use case.

To reflect the different needs of participants, the portfolio was organized around two tracks.

The programme was also built around a broader theory of change. Providing compute alone was never expected to solve Africa's AI infrastructure gap. Compute donations can accelerate innovation in the short term, but sustainable AI ecosystems require stronger foundations. From the outset, the programme sought to generate evidence, build capabilities, strengthen partnerships and demonstrate demand. The goal was not only to help founders build products today, but to create the conditions for more permanent compute infrastructure investments tomorrow.

This thinking extended to the supply side of the ecosystem. As AI adoption grows across the continent, questions of affordability, accessibility and energy efficiency become increasingly important. The programme therefore sought to explore how compute could be delivered in ways that are not only powerful, but also sustainable and inclusive. Alongside providing immediate access to resources, it aimed to contribute to a longer-term conversation about how Africa can develop the AI infrastructure, financing models and partnerships required to make compute more widely available across the continent.

The stories in the following sections are the result of that design. They show what happened when innovators were given the freedom to choose the resources they needed, the support to use them effectively, and access to infrastructure that had previously been beyond reach.

Compute donations can accelerate innovation in the short term, but sustainable AI ecosystems require stronger foundations. From the outset, the programme sought to generate evidence, build capabilities, strengthen partnerships and demonstrate demand. The goal was not only to help founders build products today, but to create the conditions for more permanent compute infrastructure investments tomorrow.

2 The stories: What African founders built when compute constraint barriers came down

CLUSTER 1:

When AI speaks your language, commercial opportunities follow

For most of the history of modern technology, the problems African founders have worked on have rarely been the ones global technology was designed to solve. Innovators have had to grapple with software built for other languages, other economies, other histories, adapted imperfectly and deployed anyway. When AI-enabled large language models began to take off in 2022, the same pattern threatened to repeat itself, only with consequences far harder to reverse. These AI language systems learn from the data they are trained on. Without the infrastructure to train models on African languages, dialects and lived realities, the continent faced the prospect of an AI era in which an Amharic speaker went unrecognized, a Kinyarwanda farmer's question went unanswered, and the experiences of thousands of communities never made it into a training dataset at all. In a world being reshaped by this technology, that is not a technical inconvenience. It is a form of erasure.

The talent to build something different was never the missing ingredient. Across Africa, founders had the vision, the ambition and a precise understanding of the problems worth solving. What they did not have was access to the compute infrastructure that transforms a well-trained model into a world-class one. That access is what the AI Hub for Sustainable Development's Compute & Talent Accelerator Programme provided, and what followed was not incremental progress, it was a qualitative leap.

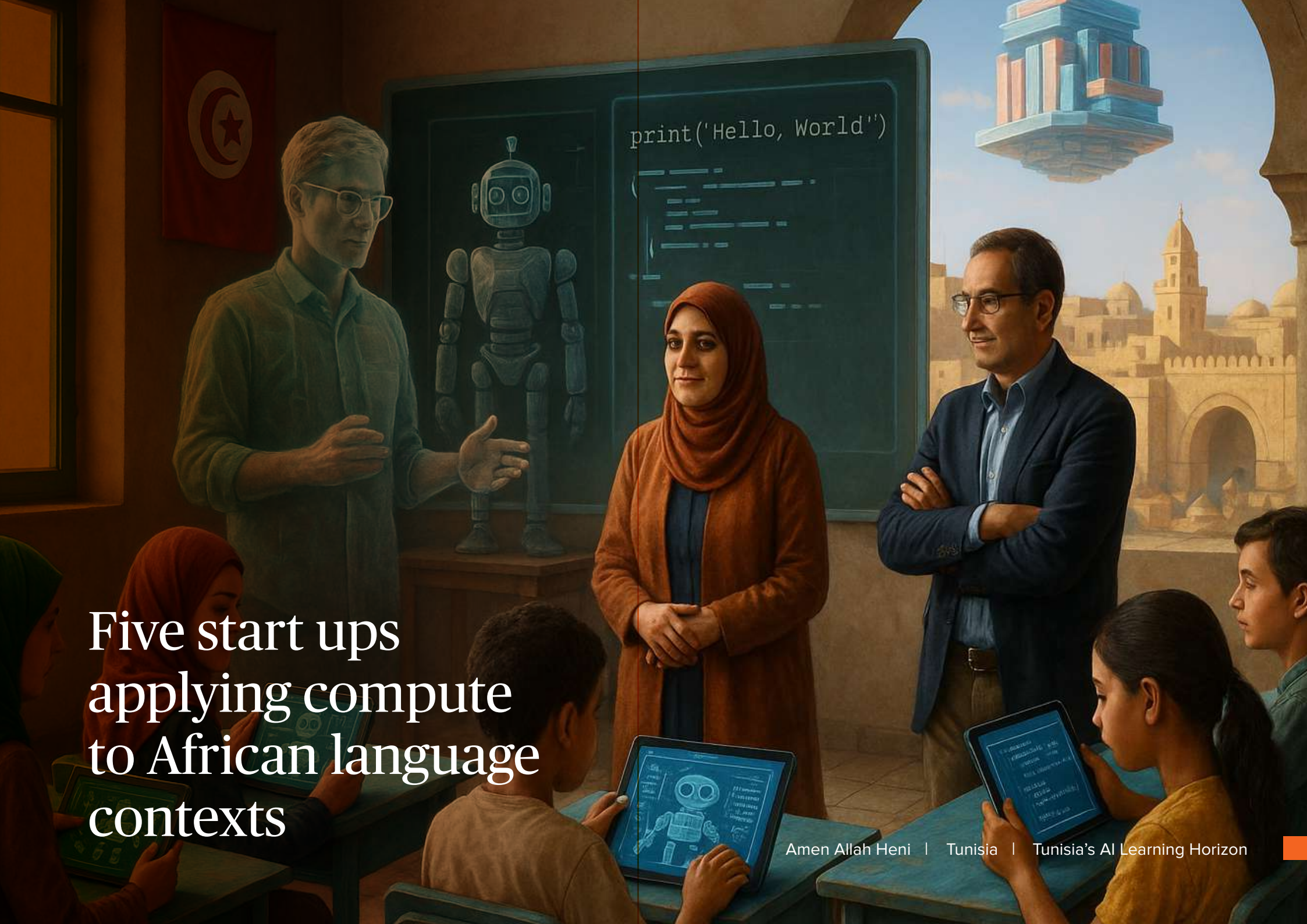
Zekarias Yemane Berhe | Ethiopia | Climate Roa

st: AI Coffee Futures

Five companies in this cohort used that compute to build AI from the ground up, applied to African languages, cultures and contexts, rather than fine-tuning from foundations built for other parts of the world. The results moved quickly beyond the technical. New commercial markets opened where none had existed before. Telecom operators, banks, airlines and governments across the continent discovered that AI could finally speak to their customers with the accuracy and cultural fluency that trust requires. The demand had always been there. For the first time, the infrastructure to meet it existed too.

The deeper story these companies share is not that African AI is catching up, they are leading the way for an AI economy rooted in inclusion, driven by local ownership, and expanding the frontier of who this technology can serve. Each language reached, each benchmark surpassed, each enterprise contract signed with an African partner represents a community brought into the promise of AI rather than left outside.

The deeper story these companies share is not that African AI is catching up, they are leading the way for an AI economy rooted in inclusion, driven by local ownership, and expanding the frontier of who this technology can serve.



Five start ups applying compute to African language contexts

Amen Allah Heni | Tunisia | Tunisia's AI Learning Horizon

Hasab AI

Language AI

Ethiopia

Compute ready

THE PROBLEM

African language speech recognition had stalled at a performance ceiling. Hasab AI's Amharic ASR was achieving 93 percent accuracy, a level that enterprise partners could not accept for customer-facing systems. At that threshold, contracts don't close. The gap between where the model was and where it needed to be was technical, not commercial, and it required compute to close.

WHAT COMPUTE UNLOCKED

Access to frontier infrastructure at CINECA enabled the training runs needed to push accuracy from 93 to 96 percent. That three-point gain is the difference between a negotiation and a signed contract. Beyond ASR, the compute enabled us to train a new text-to-speech (TTS) model and multilingual translation models, which we have since open-sourced. Collectively, these outcomes validated a broader thesis: that African language model performance gaps are not a talent problem or a data problem; they are a compute problem.

VERIFIED OUTCOMES

- Pilots launched with EBC (Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation), Zeleman Communications - two of Ethiopia's leading media and news organizations
- Commercial discussions and active pilots are underway with the Bank of Abyssinia. We signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Cooperative Bank of Oromia- two of the biggest banks in Ethiopia.
- Partnered with Orbit Health to deploy medical transcription in three local languages, reducing the time nurses and doctors spent on manual documentation.
- Partnered with IDT Express with a potential to expand to its network of countries in West and North Africa. This company has over 20 years in the market and operates in more than 70 countries.
- Multilingual translation model trained on CINECA and open-sourced, outperforming Gemini, ChatGPT, and GemmaTranslate on local languages.

STATUS

Deployed. Scaling enterprise partnerships across East Africa.

Vambo AI

Language AI

Southern African

Compute ready

THE PROBLEM

The dominant approach to building AI for African languages has been to fine-tune international foundation models whose underlying architectures, tokenisation systems and training data were not originally designed around African languages, cultures or contexts. While this has accelerated access to language technologies, it can limit linguistic representation, cultural nuance and performance across many African languages.

At the same time, limited access to compute infrastructure has constrained the ability of African AI companies to conduct large-scale research, train and evaluate language technologies, and deploy solutions that are optimized for local languages and real-world use cases. This has slowed the development of AI systems that can effectively serve African communities, businesses and institutions.

VERIFIED OUTCOMES

- Text-to-speech technology featured on CNN.
- Advanced commercial discussions underway with Econet Zimbabwe.
- Accelerated research, development, and evaluation of multilingual AI systems and small language models across African languages using compute provided through the programme.

WHAT COMPUTE UNLOCKED

Access to CINECA's compute enabled Vambo AI to accelerate research and development of multilingual language technologies across African languages. The compute resources supported experimentation, training, evaluation and optimization of small language models, speech technologies and multilingual AI systems designed for African contexts.

The infrastructure also enabled us to develop and test deployments for key use cases with partners across the continent, improving model performance, reducing inference constraints and strengthening our ability to deliver language technologies for education, financial services, public services, customer engagement and other multilingual applications.

STATUS

Pre-commercial. Advanced discussions with telecom and enterprise partners are underway

Addis AI

Language AI / Developer infrastructure

Ethiopia

Compute ready

THE PROBLEM

African developers building language applications had no infrastructure layer optimized for African languages. The commercial alternatives, including OpenAI, lacked the cultural and dialect accuracy needed for high-stakes applications like agricultural advisory. Founders building on Amharic, Afan Oromo and related languages were either adapting tools built for other contexts or starting from scratch with no compute to train on.

WHAT COMPUTE UNLOCKED

Compute access enabled training at the scale and dialect depth required to outperform OpenAI on African language benchmarks, making Addis AI the preferred choice for partners like Digital Green, a non-profit organization that empowers smallholder farmers with digital technology. The result is not just a better model: it is a platform on which 800 developers are now building, a multiplier effect that extends well beyond any single use case.

VERIFIED OUTCOMES

- 100,000 users and 800 developers building on the platform.
- 8 enterprise clients across 6 countries.
- Chosen over OpenAI by Digital Green for cultural and dialect accuracy.
- 200,000+ farmers reached in Amharic and Afan Oromo.
- Developing Africa's first voice-cloning model for education.
- Amharic ASR (open-source): Whisper-medium at 9 percent WER, since improved to 4 percent WER on Whisper-Turbo.
- State-of-the-art Amharic and Afan Oromo TTS with natural-voice capability, live to alpha users.
- Open-source Amharic datasets for continued pre-training and instruction fine-tuning.

STATUS

Deployed. Scaling developer ecosystem and enterprise partnerships.

Horus Labs

AI Infrastructure / Language AI

Rwanda

Compute ready

THE PROBLEM

Rwanda and the wider East African region had no sovereign AI compute infrastructure. Innovators building on Kinyarwanda and languages face significant challenges training large-scale models. For example, Pindo.ai's Kinyarwanda speech model needed 27,000+ hours of data trained on high-performance infrastructure. Without that, a Kinyarwanda AI ecosystem dependent on outside infrastructure would remain structurally fragile.

VERIFIED OUTCOMES

» Kinyarwanda speech model trained on 27,000+ hours, outperforming all public benchmarks.

WHAT COMPUTE UNLOCKED

Access to CINECA's compute infrastructure enabled Horus Labs to train Pindo.ai's Kinyarwanda model at the scale required to deliver benchmark-leading performance. This has produced two strategic outcomes: a model that outperforms all publicly reported Kinyarwanda benchmarks, and a sovereign AI inference platform that will enable the next generation of East African innovators to build locally relevant solutions without relying on infrastructure outside the continent.

STATUS

Pre-commercial. First client contracts expected at platform launch.

WideBot AI

Language AI

Enterprise AI

MENA

Compute ready

THE PROBLEM

Arabic NLP had been dominated by English-centric models fine-tuned or re-trained for formal Arabic, performing poorly on the regional dialects that hundreds of millions of people actually speak. For enterprise operators in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and across Middle East and North Africa (MENA), AI-powered customer systems built on standard Arabic models produced experiences users rejected. Dialect accuracy was not a nice-to-have: it was the product.

WHAT COMPUTE UNLOCKED

Compute access enabled the continuous improvements of AQL AI Suite, an Arabic-first models (ASR, TTS and LLM) built to reflect regional dialects and linguistic diversity. The team created models specifically for Arabic users. The scale of compute available made this possible, resulting in models capable of meeting the performance requirements of enterprise-grade applications and demonstrating how access to infrastructure can enable locally relevant AI systems at production scale. In fact, compute has become our main development environment.

VERIFIED OUTCOMES

- AQL AI Suite: ASR, TTS and LLM, trained and deployed.
- Live across Egypt, Saudi Arabia, UAE and wider MENA markets.
- Powering conversational assistants and enterprise information systems in regional Arabic dialects.

STATUS

Deployed. Active enterprise deployments across MENA markets.

CLUSTER 2:

The proof is in the product:
AI delivering on its development promise

These are not pilots. They are not proofs of concept. They are products, deployed, used and trusted by real people in real communities.

There is a finding, increasingly supported by research, that digital technologies, including AI, can influence the achievement of 70 percent of all Sustainable Development Goal targets. It is a striking opportunity. But figures of that magnitude risk becoming wallpaper: cited often enough that they lose their texture, large enough that the human reality behind them grows difficult to hold. The startups in this section are what that figure looks like when it stops being a projection and becomes a person. A farmer in Kenya receiving agronomic advice in her own language. A mother in a fragile pregnancy reached by a health system that would otherwise have missed her. A radiologist's insight extended to a clinic that has never had a specialist on staff. A junior midwife in Uganda, in a room with no internet connection, receiving a clinical decision prompt from an AI system running entirely on a US$150 Android device.

Every one of the 130 startups selected into the Compute & Talent Accelerator Programme was working in a priority development sector, in health, agriculture, education, energy or water. That was not incidental to the programme's design. That was the point. **The conviction from the outset was that compute, one of the most consequential resources in the modern economy, should flow towards the problems that matter most to the most people. And that the question worth answering was not simply whether African AI could be built, but whether AI, properly resourced and properly directed, could deliver on its extraordinary promise for human development.**

The four companies featured here answer that question across two sectors where the stakes are most immediate. In agriculture, DeepLeaf has grown from a crop disease detection tool into a multi-model advisory platform operating across Kenya, Morocco, and Italy, placing precision agronomic intelligence in the hands of smallholder farmers. Crane AI Labs' voice-enabled deployments ensure that intelligence reaches farmers in their own language even where connectivity does not exist. In health, Jacaranda Health is deploying AI at scale within maternal healthcare systems, reaching women in some of the highest-risk pregnancy environments on the continent. Chestify AI Labs is building medical imaging AI to clinical and regulatory-grade standards, extending diagnostic capability to settings where a missed diagnosis carries the highest possible stakes.

These are not pilots. They are not proofs of concept. They are products, deployed, used and trusted by real people in real communities. And they sit within a broader cohort of 130 startups that together demonstrate what becomes possible when AI is built with development intent, resourced with the compute it needs, and placed in the hands of founders who understand the communities they serve.

Matt Glesmycene Seinzor | Republic of the Congo | A futuristic vision of Congo powered by AI

Four innovators delivering on development in health and agriculture

DeepLeaf

Agriculture / AgriTech

Kenya, Morocco, Italy

Compute ready

THE PROBLEM

Smallholder farmers across Africa and beyond had no access to precision agronomic advice at the moment it mattered. Early crop disease detection tools existed but were single-purpose and disconnected from satellite imagery, Internet of Things (IoT) sensing, and local language advisory. Farmers could photograph a diseased leaf and get a diagnosis; they could not get what came next.

VERIFIED OUTCOMES

- 3 million+ farmers within reach through Mercy Corps, ONSA (Morocco), and Trentino partnerships.
- Active deployments in Kenya, Morocco, and Italy.
- Voice-enabled agronomic advisory in local languages delivered through Crane AI Labs integration.

WHAT COMPUTE UNLOCKED

Compute access enabled DeepLeaf to evolve from a single-use crop diagnosis vision model into a full vision-language agronomic advisory platform. Instead of only identifying crop diseases, pests, or deficiencies from images, the platform can now hold advisory conversations with farmers, explain what actions to take next, and use agentic tools connected to agronomic knowledge, satellite data, weather, soil information, and risk models. It also supports voice and multilingual advisory in 50+ languages, making precision agronomic intelligence more accessible through partners such as Mercy Corps.

STATUS

Deployed. Scaling across three continents through partnership distribution.

Jacaranda Health

Health / Maternal Health

Sub-Saharan African

Compute ready

THE PROBLEM

Maternal mortality in Sub-Saharan Africa remains among the highest in the world, partly because health systems cannot reach women during critical moments of pregnancy care. AI-powered tools have the potential to close this gap, but most are built for high-resource languages. The language barrier means the benefits of AI-assisted antenatal and postnatal care remain out of reach for the women who need them most.

VERIFIED OUTCOMES

- Deployed at scale within maternal healthcare system in Kenya.
- Reaching women in high-risk pregnancy environments.
- Transforming antenatal and postnatal care access for underserved populations.

WHAT COMPUTE UNLOCKED

Compute access has enabled the training and experimentation needed to develop multilingual AI capabilities, specifically, extending our maternal health platform to support languages like Swahili, Hausa, and Twi. This work is oriented towards integration within existing health systems rather than operating as a parallel channel, which is critical to reaching the women who need it most.

STATUS

Deployed at scale. Active within maternal health systems across the continent.

Chestify AI Labs
Transforming Healthcare with AI

Chestify AI Labs

Health / Medical Imaging

African

Compute ready

THE PROBLEM

In rural settings across Africa, radiological expertise is scarce. In settings where a specialist may never visit, conditions that are detectable are going undetected. Medical imaging AI could close that gap, but only if trained to clinical and regulatory-grade accuracy. Research-grade models are not enough: healthcare system adoption requires a quality threshold that demands training at significant compute scale.

WHAT COMPUTE UNLOCKED

Compute access enabled training to clinical and regulatory-grade standards, reaching the accuracy level at which healthcare systems can adopt the tool without unacceptable diagnostic risk. That threshold is not gradual. It is a gate, and compute was the key.

VERIFIED OUTCOMES

- Medical imaging AI trained to clinical and regulatory-grade standards.
- Extending diagnostic capability to low-resource clinical settings.
- Addressing the diagnostic gap where missed diagnoses carry the highest stakes.

STATUS

Deployed in clinical settings.

CRANE

Crane AI Labs

Health / Agriculture / Language AI

Education

SMEs and Finance

Pan-African

Compute ready

THE PROBLEM

In much of East Africa, health workers and farmers operate without reliable internet connectivity. Every digital advisory tool built on cloud connectivity fails at the point of care and the point of need. A junior midwife in a remote delivery room and a smallholder farmer without a data connection are precisely the people AI is supposed to serve, and they were precisely the people it was not reaching. Existing African-language models did not run on the entry-level Android phones community health workers actually carry, and the foundation models that could have served them had never been adapted for Ugandan clinical contexts, Luganda phonological structure, or Swahili dialect coverage.

WHAT COMPUTE UNLOCKED

CINECA access to Leonardo enabled Crane to train and fine-tune a portfolio of open-weight African-language models at a scale and quality previously unreachable from the continent. Working with Google DeepMind under the Gemmaverse Trusted Tester and Partner programme, Crane adapted the Gemma model family for low-resource African languages: Ganda-Gemma 1B (the first Luganda foundation model, outperforming GPT-5 mini on English-to-Luganda translation), Swahili-Gemma 1B (achieving 94 percent of Gemma 3 27B performance at a fraction of the size), and MedGemma fine-tuned on Uganda's National Clinical Guidelines for offline clinical decision support.

NVIDIA's first DGX Spark in East Africa was deployed at Crane's Kampala facility in April 2026 under the NVIDIA Inception partnership, providing on-continent training and inference capability that complements the CINECA relationship. On this infrastructure, Crane has shipped publicly available quantized models optimized for NVIDIA Blackwell GPUs, including an NF4-quantized MedGemma variant achieving 1.94 times the inference throughput of the baseline at less than half the memory

footprint, published openly on Hugging Face. Crane is also undertaking continual pre-training of NVIDIA's Nemotron open model family for African languages on CINECA Leonardo, and contributing open-source agent infrastructure that integrates with NVIDIA's NemoClaw agentic runtime, supporting the broader sovereign AI agent ecosystem.

Crane is the named Africa Technical Partner for the Italy–India–Kenya Voice AI Pathways trilateral, with the institutional record published on MIMIT's website. The Crane model places G7 technology partners in service of African sovereign infrastructure objectives, with training, inference, and data residency anchored in East Africa.

The combined access produced models that run entirely offline on entry-level Android devices, removing the internet dependency that had made every prior cloud-based solution unworkable in rural East African deployment settings.

VERIFIED OUTCOMES

- Health (deployed): EaseHealth offline clinical decision support deployed across 15+ health facilities in Luweero District, Uganda, reaching 268 frontline Community Health Workers under a Google.org Health AI Grant. Ethics clearance secured from Uganda's UNCST in with Clinical Co-Principal Investigator Makerere University School of Medicine. 1.6-point increase in clinical confidence on a five-point scale; 85 percent of users would continue using the tool; zero adverse events across the deployment.
- Agriculture (live): Swahili voice and SMS advisory live on Telegram (t.me/Hello_tractor_bot) with Hello Tractor's farmer network in Kenya and Ethiopia, reaching 2.5 million-plus smallholder farmers, with WeatherNext forecast integration and a pathway to 6.5 million households through Shamba Records' KALRO partnership.
- Education (open-sourced May 2026): EduGanda-Gemma-3-1B released open-source with Fab AI for foundational literacy teacher support — 66 percent on the Luganda Linguistic Pedagogical Knowledge benchmark, 58.8 percent on the Luganda Linguistic Knowledge benchmark, outperforming a model four times its size.
- AI safety: Uganda Cultural Context Benchmark (UCCB) adopted by the UK AI Safety Institute into the Inspect Evals framework – the first African-built benchmark adopted into a G7 government AI safety evaluation pipeline.
- Forward direction: Building towards Nemotron-based sovereign voice and reasoning models for African enterprise use cases, including financial inclusion through the SocialPay partnership in Uganda and SME advisory applications across SACCO networks.
- Institutional positioning: Featured at Google I/O 2026 Gemmaverse keynote. Africa Technical Partner of the UNDP-coordinated Voice AI Pathways trilateral (Italy–India–Kenya). Demonstrated at the India AI Impact Summit, New Delhi, February 2026, and at the Nairobi AI Forum, February 2026.

STATUS

Deployed. Expanding clinical and agricultural deployments across East Africa.

CLUSTER 3:

Laying the rails: Building the human and technical infrastructure of African AI

Africa's AI future will not be secured by applications alone, however impressive. It will be secured by the foundations those applications run on: the compute platforms, the data infrastructure, the financing models and, above all, the people who know how to build and sustain all of it.

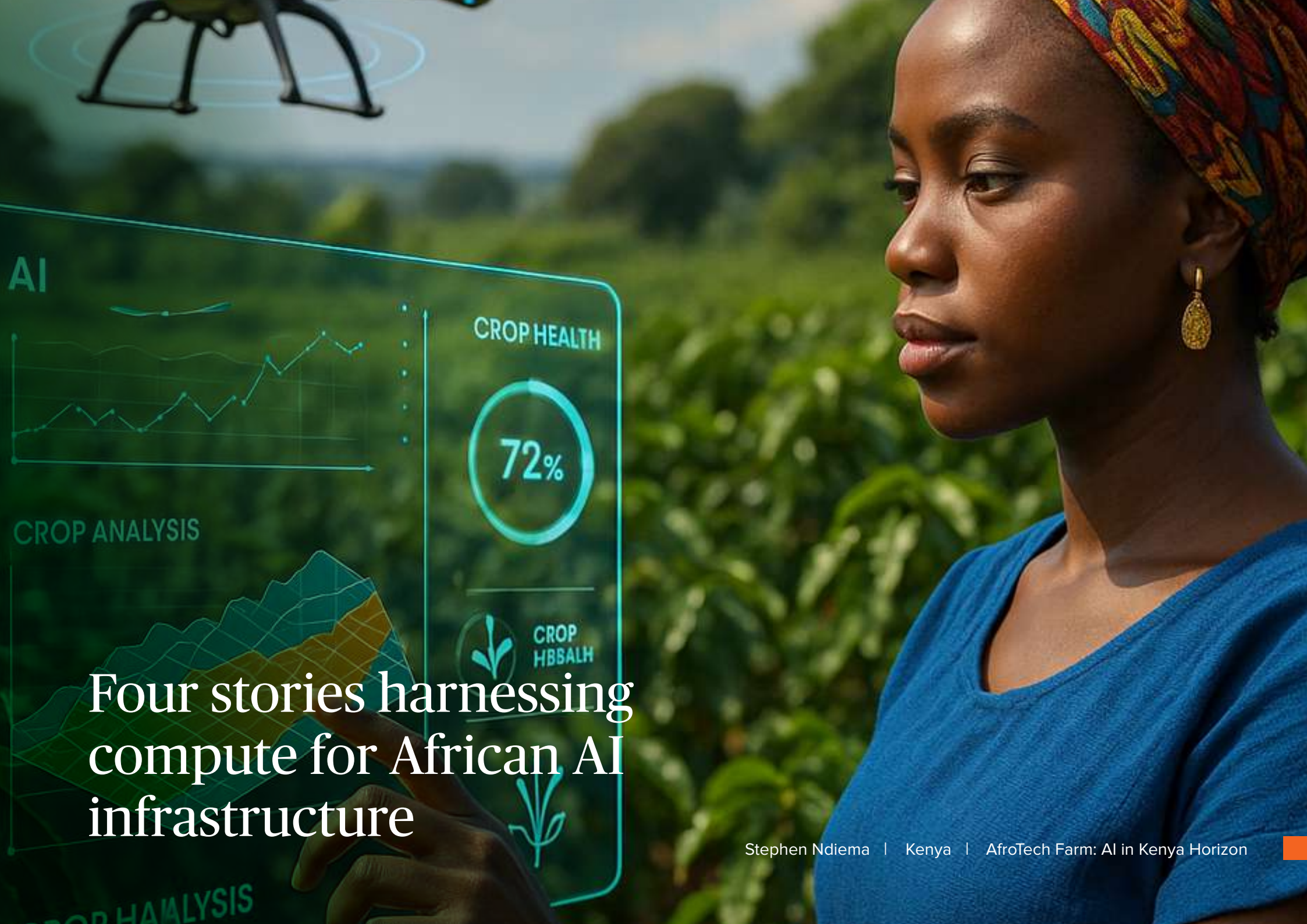
Brilliant applications built on borrowed infrastructure are fragile. They depend on access that can be withdrawn, on compute owned elsewhere, and decisions made by people with different priorities and different timelines. Africa's AI future will not be secured by applications alone, however impressive. It will be secured by the foundations those applications run on: the compute platforms, the data infrastructure, the financing models and, above all, the people who know how to build and sustain all of it. From the outset, the Compute & Talent Accelerator Programme treated investment in those foundations not as a secondary ambition but as a central one.

That investment took two forms, distinct in nature but inseparable in purpose.

The first was human. Alongside its cohort of market-ready startups, the programme created space for 100 compute-curious ventures and institutions, early-stage builders with strong potential and limited prior access to high-performance computing, for whom the most valuable intervention was not acceleration but initiation. Many arrived with an idea and left with a prototype, a trained model, or a technical foundation they had not known how to reach before. By providing compute, the programme gave them something harder to measure and more enduring than a product: the capability and the confidence to keep building. That investment extended to talent at its earliest stage, with over 200 students accessing GPU resources for the first time at Africa's first pan-continental AI Olympiad. These are the researchers, engineers and founders of Africa's next wave of AI innovation.

The second form of investment was technical. Four startups in this cohort used their compute access not to build applications but to build the infrastructure on which future applications will run. Their work is the subject of the stories that follow.

Mário Neves Gonçalo Chilundo | Mozambique | Dreaming Tomorrow in Rural Mozambique



Four stories harnessing compute for African AI infrastructure

Stephen Ndiema | Kenya | AfroTech Farm: AI in Kenya Horizon

Africa Compute Fund

AI Infrastructure / Finance

Kenya

Compute ready

THE PROBLEM

African AI founders were historically dependent on compute infrastructure owned, governed, and priced outside the continent. While cloud credits allowed for initial experimentation, they could not sustain the massive training runs required to produce world-class models.

Furthermore, there was no sovereign compute utility built for the realities of African deployment, and no clear pathway for model builders to host, meter, and monetize their creations locally. The continent was renting capacity it could not afford and building nothing it would own, while struggling to deploy models in environments where rigid, dollar-based billing presented a structural barrier.

WHAT COMPUTE UNLOCKED

Access to the CINECA supercomputing cluster enabled the Africa Compute Fund to transition from isolated experimentation into a stable, high-throughput operational phase. The fund used the allocation to build and stabilize a complete, enterprise-grade technical pipeline.

This access directly accelerated the simultaneous development of the **Monarch Platform** and the next-generation **Monarch-2** foundational LLM.

- The Monarch platform: Functions as a unified compute utility and orchestration layer. Instead of acting as a standalone cloud provider, it allows users to discover GPUs, launch training jobs, manage models, deploy inference workloads, and control costs across multiple infrastructure providers and regions seamlessly. It serves as the local hosting and distribution layer where builders can expose their models to customer-facing workflows and monetization paths.
- Monarch-2 foundational LLM: Built specifically to move beyond basic language translation. Monarch-2 is being trained at scale to master the broader institutional, economic, market, and domain-specific context of the continent, ensuring the AI behaves reliably within local operational environments.

- Monarch task models: To eliminate the high cost of custom AI implementation, the fund introduced a specialized model layer out-of-the-box inside Monarch. These task-ready model families are explicitly pre-architected around the recurring operational workflows of real organizations, significantly lowering setup costs, reducing ongoing usage overhead, and accelerating time-to-value.

This technical execution delivers part of the concrete evidence and proof of concept required to attract infrastructure investment, anchoring the upcoming Naivasha Special Economic Zone (SEZ) data centre in Kenya, as well as new data centre facilities in Vipingo SEZ and Great Rift Industrial Park.

VERIFIED OUTCOMES

- Monarch compute utility operational: A live, unified orchestration layer allowing developers to manage workloads, discover GPUs, and monitor costs across multiple regions.
- Enterprise - grade training pipeline stabilized: Implemented full production infrastructure covering ingestion, automated job orchestration, and Slurm observability for large-scale runs.
- Monarch-2 development advanced: Core model development workflow active, utilizing structured datasets to train models on African economic, institutional, and domain realities.

Monarch task models deployed: Launched six specialized, operational model families accessible programmatically via the Monarch API to address repeating organizational tasks:

- *Monarch Finance*: Tailored for document-heavy, risk-sensitive financial operations like KYC extraction, transaction classification, and fraud review.
- *Monarch Civic*: Built for public sector administration, processing complex documentation for tender requirement extraction, compliance mapping, and bid gap detection.
- *Monarch Trade*: Optimized for logistics and cross-border commerce documentation, parsing invoices, bills of lading, and packing lists to handle shipping exceptions.
- *Monarch Farm*: Designed for agribusiness, managing field guidance, crop advisory data, and localized extension service workflows.
- *Monarch Health*: Formulated to support overstretched care teams by automating administrative workflows like clinical notes, triage assistance, and referral drafting.
- *Monarch Service*: Structured for multilingual customer support, managing complaint triage and intent classification across diverse local communication styles.

Commercial de-risking: Transformed our supercomputing allocation into part of the foundational evidence needed to contribute to de-risking and securing data centre development at the Naivasha SEZ, Vipingo SEZ and Great Rift Industrial Park.

STATUS

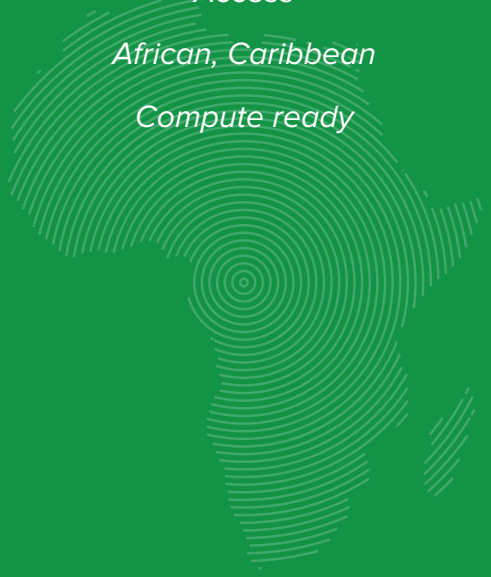
Infrastructure in development. Platform operational. Financing model active.

Udu Technologies

AI Infrastructure / Compute Access

African, Caribbean

Compute ready



THE PROBLEM

Most African organizations wanting to adopt AI-grade compute had no guidance on what hardware to procure, how to configure it, or how to design data centre infrastructure. The gap was not only access to compute: it was the knowledge needed to make compute decisions that would hold up over time and serve the specific conditions of different African contexts.

WHAT COMPUTE UNLOCKED

Programme access accelerated platform development and provided the technical depth that makes Udu's GPU procurement and data centre design advice credible. An AI concierge service is only useful if its knowledge is current and its recommendations are specific; CINECA access ensured both.

VERIFIED OUTCOMES

- Right-sized GPU setups and data centre blueprints delivered across Africa and the Caribbean.
- Reducing compute procurement complexity for organizations without existing infrastructure expertise.

STATUS

Operational. Active client deployments across Africa and the Caribbean.

AfCEN
Africa Climate and Energy Nexus

Africa Climate and Energy Nexus

AI Infrastructure / Policy / Green AI

Pan-African

Compute ready

THE PROBLEM

No unified intelligence layer existed connecting African AI infrastructure to the regulatory frameworks, renewable energy corridors, and green finance vehicles that determine where investment can flow and at what cost. European Union regulations including the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) and European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) were creating compliance uncertainty for African operators without any tool to map their exposure. Investment decisions were being made blind in both directions.

VERIFIED OUTCOMES

- Infrastructure intelligence layer covering 54 African jurisdiction.
- 10 strategic corridors mapped against renewable energy, green finance, and sovereign compute variables.
- EU regulatory frameworks (CBAM, EUDR) integrated for African operators and investors.

WHAT COMPUTE UNLOCKED

Compute access enabled the database construction and model training required to build AfCEN, an Africa-led platform driving climate-positive growth through climate tech, AI, and data-driven strategies. It also enabled the mapping of 54 African jurisdictions and 10 strategic corridors at the depth needed for policy and investment decisions. The output is an intelligence layer that did not exist before: one capable of connecting infrastructure planning, regulatory compliance, and green finance in a single view.

STATUS

Platform operational. Used for infrastructure, regulatory, and investment intelligence.

DATA SPIRES

DataSpires

AI Infrastructure / Education

Pan-African

Compute ready

THE PROBLEM

For most African students and early-stage builders, accessing high-performance compute required configuring encrypted Secure Shell (SSH) connections, managing backend infrastructure, and navigating a technical setup that assumed prior experience they did not have. The barrier was not only cost: it was complexity. Talent existed across the continent that had never touched a GPU.

VERIFIED OUTCOMES

- AfriLink live: GPU access through a single pip install, no backend configuration required, on-demand, fractional GPU access enabled.
- Powered Africa's first pan-continental AI Olympiad.
- 45 students accessing high-performance compute for the first time.

WHAT COMPUTE UNLOCKED

Programme access enabled the development of AfriLink SDK, a developer toolkit that provides programmatic access to AI compute infrastructure (GPUs, datasets, models, and high performance computing (HPC) clusters) from a notebook or code environment, which reduces GPU access to a single pip install, and powered Africa's first pan-continental AI Olympiad. Giving 45 students their first hands-on experience with high-performance computing is not a skills exercise: it is an investment in the people who will build what comes next. Following development of the AfriLink SDK on CINECA infrastructure, DataSpires partnered with OpenToken to run a pilot with the Indian Institute of Technology Madras Zanzibar (IITMZ), providing student access to GPU compute through a separate backend.

STATUS

Operational. Platform active for student and early-stage builder access.

3 The flywheel is moving. Demand is the opportunity.

A flywheel is a self-reinforcing system where each component powers the next move, and over time, the whole system builds its own momentum. The African Development Bank's report, *Africa's AI Productivity Gain*, describes this dynamic as an AI readiness flywheel, arguing that coordinated progress across compute, data, skills, trust, and capital could unlock significant growth and millions of new jobs across the continent. The Compute & Talent Accelerator Programme moved the flywheel for the African AI ecosystem. Compute reached founders who were ready, and those founders converted it into breakthroughs faster than anyone had predicted. Breakthroughs attracted commercial partners, partners validated the case for further investment, and that investment is already pulling the next generation of builders into motion.

But the most significant outcome the programme produced was not a product, a benchmark, or a contract. It was demand. Founders discovered what they could build when the constraint lifted. Communities discovered what it felt like to be served by AI in their own language. Policymakers, development partners, and investors gained greater visibility into the capabilities emerging across the African AI ecosystem. The gap in demand is not shrinking. In the most important sense it is growing, because the community of builders, buyers, and beneficiaries who now know what is possible, and who will not go back, is larger than it was before. That is not a problem. That is the flywheel working exactly as it should.

What comes next no longer needs to prove demand. It needs to build the conditions under which demand compounds. Phase one set out to answer a single open question: given the compute, how quickly could African founders direct this processing power into the development sectors that could be impacted most. That question is now answered. But the response cannot simply be this programme repeated on a larger scale. That would be the wrong response to the right moment. Demand, once activated, has its own requirements. It needs to be understood across the full breadth of the continent. It needs to be trusted by the governments and institutions it must work through. It needs capital coordinated at a scale commensurate with the opportunity. And it needs to reach the people it is ultimately for, in the languages they speak, on the devices they hold, in places where connectivity has never been guaranteed. These requirements do not sit in sequence. They reinforce each other, and the AI Hub is building towards all of them at once.

A flywheel, however, only keeps turning if the people behind it know where to direct their energy. That is what the UNDP AI Landscape Assessments provide, and which have been tried and tested in 50 countries. Now, across more than a dozen African countries, the AI

Hub and its partners are completing these structured diagnostic assessments, mapping each country's readiness across infrastructure, skills, data, governance, and innovation capacity. For the flywheel of the African AI ecosystem, their value is precise: these assessments make potential demand visible and legible to the institutions best placed to act on it. They tell governments where they stand and what investments will move them forward. They tell financiers where capital will find the conditions to work. They give builders and innovators a shared, evidence-based snapshot of where the ecosystem is strong and where it remains fragile. Without this intelligence, the flywheel spins without direction. With it, every subsequent investment, every governance decision, every deployment becomes more targeted and more compounding in its effect.

What comes next no longer needs to prove demand. It needs to build the conditions under which demand compounds.

Maura Micucci | Italy | Langhe Connected by African Heart

The flywheel meets the grid: Energy-aware data centres

As the African AI ecosystem scales, so does a question that cannot be deferred: what does an energy-aware data centre look like on a continent where energy demand is as uneven as the grid itself, renewable potential is extraordinary, and the cost of getting infrastructure design wrong compounds over decades? The AI Hub has been engaging universities and industry actors across Europe and Africa to explore exactly this question, in ways that are grounded in African deployment realities.

The questions span energy integration, workload optimization, modular architecture, and cooling, and they are the engineering problems that will determine whether the infrastructure the flywheel now demands can be built sustainably, at scale, on African soil.

On the ground, Horus Labs, an infrastructure builder in this cohort, is already living these questions. Its modular, renewable-powered data centres are designed explicitly for settings where demand is uncertain and grid reliability cannot be assumed, a design logic that is as much energy intelligence as it is commercial sense. To bring the best of European infrastructure thinking directly into that process, the AI Hub facilitated Horus Labs' visit to CINECA, Italy's national supercomputing facility hosted by the University of Bologna, and the University of Torino creating a tangible bridge between frontier compute expertise and the realities of African deployment.

What emerges from both directions, active exploration and early practice, is a convergent signal: that building compute for Africa, done well, may produce some of the most energy-aware data centre thinking anywhere in the world.

Eric Adé Tanauh | Côte d'Ivoire | Graines d'Avenir Ivoirien

Evidence alone, however, cannot hold demand in place. Across Africa and the Global South, governments are entering AI agreements with frontier technology companies at a pace that governance capacity has not kept up with. Through UNDP's AI Trust and Safety Re-imagination Programme, which creates practices that actively anticipate and prevent harm, the AI Hub is building the governance architecture that keeps AI adoption responsible and durable. It is producing assessment methodologies, risk profiling frameworks, escalation structures, and institutional sequencing models that travel across geographies and grow more refined with each engagement. Demand that is ungoverned creates exposure, loses public trust, and ultimately contracts. Demand that is governed, accountable, and institutionally embedded is demand that holds, and a flywheel that holds is one that keeps accelerating.

Direction and trust, however, require capital to become infrastructure. A flywheel needs more than momentum. It needs the coordinated investment that turns individual breakthroughs into a continental economy. The AI 10 Billion Initiative, anchored by the African Development Bank and UNDP in alignment with the African Union Continental Artificial Intelligence Strategy, is the architecture designed to provide exactly

Stephen Ndiema | Mauritania | Digital Lights of the Desert

that. Organized around five investment clusters, covering physical and compute infrastructure; data and interoperability; economic applications across agriculture, health and industry; human capital and skills; and the policy and governance environment, the Initiative maps directly onto the components the African AI ecosystem depends on. It aggregates what has, until now, been a collection of parallel national ambitions into a coordinated continental pipeline, structured so that institutional capital, development finance, sovereign governments, and private investors can engage around a common architecture rather than a fragmented set of projects. The compute programme demonstrated that African founders convert investment into results with speed, precision and quality. The AI 10 Billion Initiative is how that demonstration becomes a foundation rather than a footnote, by ensuring every component of the ecosystem is resourced, connected, and compounding together.

Yet infrastructure only fulfils its purpose when it reaches the people it was built for, and this is where the innovators supported through the AI Hub programme are already showing the way, as evidenced from the stories in the preceding pages.

The AI Impact Summit held in India in February 2026 saw 12 founding partners, including Anthropic and EkStep Foundation launch 100 AI diffusion pathways. The trilateral agreement between Italy, India, and Kenya, also launched during the Summit, and with a focus on scaling AI pathways and a specific emphasis on voice-enabled AI is designed to extend this reach further. The partnership will result in an open source toolkit that gives any African innovator the infrastructure to deliver services by voice, in local languages, on a basic mobile phone, with or without connectivity. Fifteen replicable pathways across the continent, each one a structured package of technical solutions, governance decisions, and replication guides that any country can adopt without rebuilding from scratch, are the goal. What the innovators, the private sector partners in the Compute & Talent Accelerator cohort proved is possible at the product level, the voice-enabled AI programme will replicate at the continental level.

Understand the landscape. Build the trust. Coordinate the capital across every component of the flywheel. Reach the last mile. These are not parallel workstreams. They are a single, compounding logic, and the work of the AI Hub across all four domains is what turns activated demand into a durable African AI economy.

Understand the landscape. Build the trust. Coordinate the capital across every component of the flywheel. Reach the last mile. These are not parallel workstreams. They are a single, compounding logic, and the work of the AI Hub across all four domains is what turns activated demand into a durable African AI economy.

A year ago, investing at continental scale in African AI was a bet on a thesis. Today it is a follow-on to a result. From 130 founders, 6 months and 1.5 million hours of compute, what emerged was language models outperforming global benchmarks, health tools running offline in delivery rooms, and infrastructure breaking ground on African soil. What African AI innovators can build, given the right conditions is no longer a hypothesis, it is a body of work. Now, the only open question is how far the same conditions – extended, governed, financed, and made accessible to all – will carry them. That is the work ahead, and it has already begun.

Anas Youssef | Egypt | Nile Nexus: AI Rebirth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and Made in Italy
Mattei Plan
for Africa