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D6.1 Plan for dissemination, exploitation and communication

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1.0	30/06/2025	Final check and submission	André Cardozo Sarli (MI), Émilie Mespoulhes (SU)

Executive summary

The present deliverable provides an overview of the plan for dissemination, exploitation and communication activities for the DIGITAfrica project, which aims to The DIGITAfrica project aims to lay the foundations for a comprehensive pan-African research infrastructure in Digital Sciences and to develop a strategic approach through collaboration and stakeholder engagement to foster Euro-African cooperation in research and innovation.

The Plan for dissemination, exploitation and communication activities outlines the objectives and methodologies for preparing actions and sharing outcomes. These activities will be carried out in close collaboration between all consortium members, underscoring the collective effort required for the project's success. The plan defines five strategic objectives to achieve through communication actions: (1) to define a clear and distinctive brand identity for DIGITAfrica; (2) to ensure broad visibility and dissemination of DIGITAfrica's work and results to targeted stakeholder groups; (3) to promote DIGITAfrica for widespread adoption beyond programme borders through strategic coordination with all stakeholders; (4) to facilitate the exploitation of DIGITAfrica outcomes by encouraging innovative solutions that create socio-economic impact; and (5) to support the long-term sustainability of DIGITAfrica beyond its project lifetime.

Table of contents

List of tables

List of figures

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AU	African Union
CA	Consortium Agreement
DEC	Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication
DoA	Description of Action
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FAIR	Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability, and Reusability
GA	Grant Agreement
GCC	Global Code of Conduct for Equitable Research Partnerships

IoT	Internet of Things
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
KER	Key Exploitable Result
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
ML	Machine Learning
RI	Research Infrastructure
STISA	Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa
WP	Work Package

1 Introduction

This deliverable provides a plan for dissemination, exploitation, and communication activities as part of Work Package 6 on Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication, led by Mandat International (MI), in the context of Task 6.1 Communication and Dissemination Activities. The present strategy outlines the objectives and methodologies to be used for preparing actions as well as to share DIGITAfrica outcomes in conjunction with the other tasks in WP6, including:

- T6.2 Liaison with Regional Authorities and Recommendations

- T6.3 Synergies and Dialogue with the Civil Society and Industry

This first iteration of the deliverable is due in M6 (June 2025) and is intended to be a living document continuously updated during the project lifestyle to select the appropriate tools and communication channels for internal and external activities. It is intended for the DIGITAfrica consortium members to be used as a reference document. In M18 (June 2026), an interim report will be produced, and in M36 (December 2027), the third version of the present deliverable will report on all dissemination, exploitation and communication achievements.

1.1 DIGITAfrica dissemination, exploitation and communication roadmap

The DIGITAfrica project will be done alongside both research and technological developments. Here, close collaboration between all consortium members will be integral for the success of the activities to be carried out. During the early stages of the project, the focus is put on research, technical developments, and the construction of strategies for dissemination, exploitation and communication. This is done by defining priorities and the strategic vision, identifying relevant partners, and coordinating the provision of such activities. Figure 1 provides a high-level overview of the DIGITAfrica dissemination, exploitation and communication roadmap:
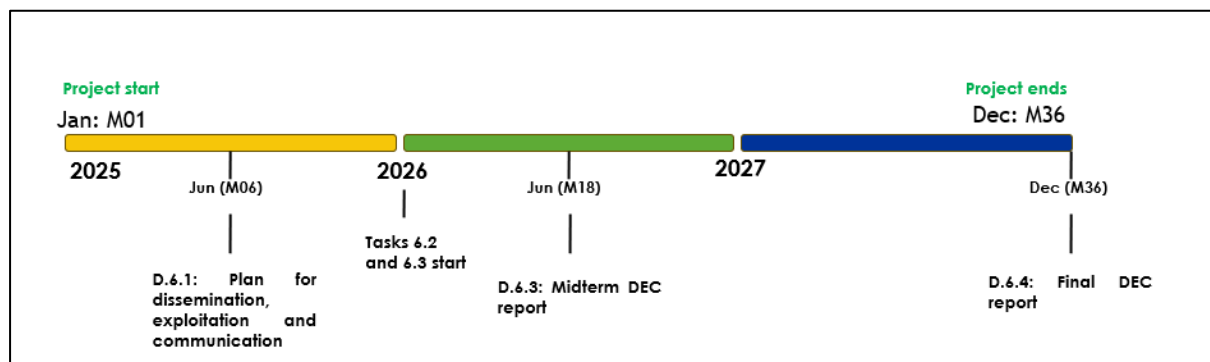

Figure 1 - DIGITAfrica Dissemination, exploitation and communication roadmap

Based on this, the DIGITAfrica strategic roadmap suggests four stages along the verticals of Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication. This instrument enables an effective approach towards defining, planning, organizing, and exploiting project outcomes and results. The four stages include:

- **Launch (M01-M6):** This phase created the DIGITAfrica project identity, define the target audience, set up the website and other communication channels, and initiate introductory campaigns. The rationale is to grow DIGITAfrica's brand awareness and integrity using strong visual identity & immersive engagement strategy and to map key stakeholders' needs and prioritize actions to respond to those needs.
- **Growth (M07-24):** Contribute to empowering the key stakeholders in making the most out of the DIGITAfrica's results to innovative solutions for preparing an effective and long-term pan-African Digital research infrastructure. Get insights on feasible exploitation and sustainability strategies.
- **Synergies (M25-M36):** Pursue synergies and collaboration opportunities with relevant academia, industry, policy and general public actors in Africa and in the EU. Join together the key stakeholder units and build a plan for the DIGITAfrica's results exploitation. This phase will support the project in developing webinars, workshops, demos, meetings, and conference, and including the development of a MoU between the partners.
- **Legacy (5+ years after the project):** Evaluate and monitor the exploitation plan's execution status. Enhance and maintain the website and other communication mediums. Extend DIGITAfrica's solutions with additional systems, engage with new key stakeholders across new markets and geographies, keeping the momentum high.

1.2 Deliverable Structure

The deliverable is structured into six sections, as follows:

1. **Introduction:** Presents the context of the deliverable and outlines a structured roadmap for dissemination, exploitation, and communication, divided into four key phases.

2. **Mission and Objectives:** Describes the aims of this deliverable, detailing both overarching and specific objectives.

3. **Communication Strategy:** Outlines the project's approach to communication, focusing on stakeholder engagement, visual identity, digital platforms, and promotional materials for conferences and events, all aligned with the defined KPIs.

4. **Dissemination Strategy:** Details the dissemination plan, highlighting international outreach, participation in conferences, and publications, in accordance with the KPIs.

5. **Exploitation Strategy:** Examines pathways to ensure the sustainability and long-term impact of the project's outcomes

6. **Conclusion:** Summarizes and closes the deliverable.

2 Mission and Objectives

DIGITAfrica's mission is to collaboratively design a framework and ecosystem for a comprehensive pan-African Research Infrastructure (RI) in Digital Sciences. This initiative seeks to strengthen research, innovation, and education across both Africa and Europe. By laying the groundwork for this RI, the project aims to generate a transformative impact on AU-EU cooperation in Research and Innovation (R&I), while promoting cutting-edge education and training in Digital Sciences.

The approach emphasizes co-construction through shared experiences, stakeholder consultations in five African Union countries and the EU, and inclusive dialogue to shape a strategic vision. A thorough analysis of the African research landscape will identify key communities, existing capacities, and strategic opportunities, aligning with the African Union's Science, Technology, and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2024), which prioritizes the development of RIs, skills enhancement, and entrepreneurship.

The DIGITAfrica project aims to:

- **Strategic Framework for a Pan-African RI in Digital Sciences:** Co-develop a strategy to structure a pan-African Research Infrastructure (RI) in Digital Sciences with transformative impact on AU-EU R&I and education. The project fosters dialogue with institutional and industry stakeholders, leveraging existing AU-EU collaborations. Key result 1: the design study for a sustainable DIGITAfrica RI[1].
- **Community Building and Ecosystem Development:** Strengthen Digital Sciences communities by connecting AU initiatives (e.g., STISA-2024) with relevant EU RIs, expanding partnerships, and fostering opportunities for researchers, students, and entrepreneurs. Key result 2: a DIGITAfrica network of R&I nodes, a shared MoU, and a joint research agenda.
- **Capacity Building in Digital Sciences:** Support competence-based training tailored to African needs, focusing on AI, data, and digital literacy. Emphasis on enhancing education and skills. Key result 3: the DIGITAfrica capacity building portfolio.
- **Support for Female and Young Researchers:** Promote inclusive education and early digital literacy to boost participation of women and young people in R&I. Key result 4: guidelines for inclusive learning and participation.
- **Proof of Concept and Collaborative Platform:** Develop a "playground" for testing tools and practices in joint research, enabling cross-continental collaboration. Key result 5: a co-designed Blueprint platform for future DIGITAfrica activities.
- **Sustainable Pathway for DIGITAfrica RI:** Define long-term sustainability, including governance and investment strategies, to ensure lasting AU-EU cooperation in R&I. This will be integrated in KR1 - the RI design study.

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[1] See table 5 for the detailed Key results

2.1 Partners

The DIGITAfrica consortium gathers 13 partners, being 8 from Europe and 5 from Africa, as depicted in Figure 2.
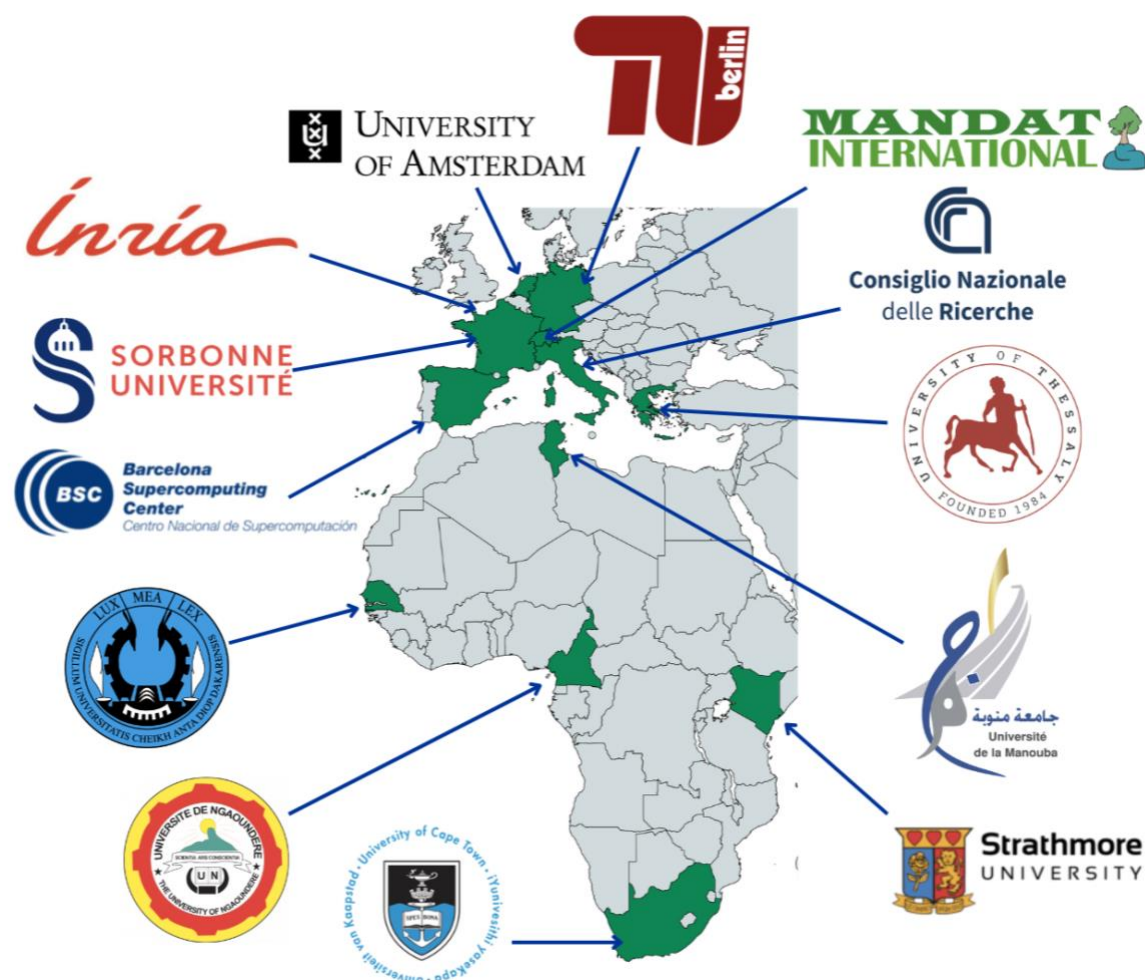
Figure 2 - DIGITAfrica Consortium members

The partners are presented in Table 1.

Number	Short name	Legal name	Country
1	SU	Sorbonne Université	France
2	BSC	Barcelona Supercomputing Center	Spain
3	CNR	Consiglio Nazionale Delle Ricerche	Italy
4	INRIA	Institut National De Recherche En Informatique Et Automatique	France
5	UTH	Panepistimio Thessalias (University of Thessaly)	Greece
6	STR	Strathmore University	Kenya

7	TUB	Technische Universitat Berlin	Germany
8	UCAD	Universite Cheikh Anta Diop De Dakar	Senegal
9	UMA	Universite de la Manouba	Tunisia
10	UN	Universite de Ngoundéré	Cameroon
11	UvA	Universiteit Van Amsterdam	Netherlands
12	UCT	University Of Cape Town	South Africa
13	MI	Mandat International	Switzerland

Table 1 - List of partners

2.2 Global dissemination, exploitation and communication objectives

The present D6.1 Plan for Dissemination and Exploitation, including communication activities, employs a multi-channel approach with the objective of maximizing reach and disseminating information on the project's aims, added value and outcomes to all stakeholders. In doing so, the Plan intend to facilitate the adoption of DIGITAfrica's innovative solutions for the preparation of an effective and long-term pan-African Digital research infrastructure.

It is therefore possible to identify five primary objectives with regard to the communication actions of the DIGITAfrica project:

(1) Define a clear and distinctive brand identity for DIGITAfrica. The brand identity will be consistent online and offline and will represent the cornerstone values of DIGITAfrica.

(2) Ensure broad visibility and dissemination of DIGITAfrica's work and results to targeted stakeholder groups.

(3) Effectively promote DIGITAfrica for widespread adoption beyond programme borders through strategic coordination efforts encompassing all stakeholders.

(4) Facilitate the exploitation of DIGITAfrica outcomes by promoting the development of innovative solutions based on DIGITAfrica for effective socio-economic impact creation.

(5) Support the sustainability of DIGITAfrica beyond its funding period.

Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication are intertwined and dependent on the different Work Packages:

- The outcomes of WP1 (Needs and Gaps), which include demand analysis and identification of research communities and RI service needs, will guide the communication and dissemination efforts to ensure relevance to target communities.

- WP3 (African RI Blueprint): The "Blueprint assessment and lessons learned" (Task 3.4), a deliverable of WP3, will be exploited mostly in WP5 and WP6. The Blueprint will also serve as a tool for dissemination itself.
- WP4 (Capacity building and education): Innovative education and training tools developed in WP4 (e.g., training courses, workshops, winter/summer schools in Task 4.3) will be linked to the dissemination strategy developed in WP6 to strengthen their inclusiveness. WP4 courses will have a dedicated page in the website and will be featured in regular posts in social media with notice of openings, testimonials, etc..
- WP5 (Sustainability): WP6 activities, including liaison with regional authorities (Task 6.2), contribute to defining a sustainable path for the DIGITAfrica RI, which is the objective of WP5. Dissemination and communication are crucial for securing funding and reaching appropriate stakeholders for sustainability. The proposed common research agenda (Task 5.2) and the DIGITAfrica MoU (Task 5.4), both within WP5, will also be shared mainly through WP6's DEC measures

3 Strategy for communication

The communication strategy developed by DIGITAfrica aims to increase the visibility of the project's initiatives and broaden its impact to targeted communities, thereby ensuring effective promotion. To support this, a dedicated set of key performance indicators (KPIs) has been identified to evaluate the dissemination, exploitation, and digital communication progress. Table 2 presents the selected indicators used to monitor communication activities, and the current results at the M6.

Measure and target groups	Indicators	Target	Current results (M6)
DIGITAfrica website (TG: All)	No. of unique visitors to the website	> 1000 visitors/year	www.digitafrica.eu The website garnered 853 visitors since launch (30 March 2025)
DIGITAfrica video presentation of the concept of a pan-African Digital RI (TG: All)	No. of video and n° of views	1 video and > 1000 views	Video production has not started
DIGITAfrica e-brochure (TG: All)	No. of brochures distributed	At least 200 downloads per year	Brochure production has not started.
DIGITAfrica Posters (TG: All)	No. of posters produced	4 in total	DIGITAfrica produced three posters for the project and one for the website.
High-level presentation materials for policy makers (TG: 2, 3, 6, 7)	No. of sets	At least 1 per year	The materials are dependent on the results of other work packages

Social networks (TG: All)	No. of followers: LinkedIn/X	> 500 /> 200	Number of followers for LinkedIn: 135

Table 2 - Selected indicators for communication activities

It must be stated that in the first meetings, the partners did not choose to pursue creating an account on X (former twitter), due to loss of relevance and the regression of several data protection, fact-checking and AI safeguards measures that the platform underwent since 2024.

3.1 Stakeholder strategy

To share the DIGITAfrica vision and key messages with a wide pool of stakeholders, a specific strategy was set to achieve the best possible outcomes. This subsection focuses on both the segmented target groups identified, including the information to be shared with them by specific means, as well as the collaboration strategy with sister projects, other international projects, and specific groups set up by the European Commission (EC).

3.1.1 Target Groups

The list of key stakeholders has been segmented into specific target groups in accordance with the Description of Action (DoA). As part of the stakeholder outreach strategy, each segment has been divided into main categories and subcategories. This has established the foundations for an effective and lasting stakeholder engagement.

Stakeholder Group	Main Category	Subcategories
Scientific and research community	Academia and Research	Universities, Research Institutions, Centers
Female and young researchers	Academia and Research	Universities, Research Institutions, Centers
AU Member States, regional authorities and policy makers	Policy Makers Authorities	Government, Ministries, Agencies; AU, EU; International, National, Local
EU Horizon Europe and ESFRI	Funding Bodies	EU programmes, Horizon Europe, ESFRI, UN, etc.
Industrial and SME	Industry & SMEs	Research Departments, SME
Standardisation organisations	Standardisation Bodies	Standardisation organisations
General Public	General public	Citizens, Civil Society, Media

Table 3 - Target groups

3.1.2 Visual Identity

One of the goals of the project is to be immediately and strongly recognized while highlighting the focus on the African continent. The visual identity plays a strong role in this objective. This identity includes all graphic elements that contribute to make the project visually unique. Below, we share the materials that were developed for the project and their rationale.

The DIGITAfrica visual identity includes the official project logo, a defined colour scheme, specified typography, and standard templates for Word documents and PowerPoint presentations. The EU emblem must also be included in all official materials.

3.1.2.1 DIGITAfrica Logo

The DIGITAfrica brand identity is primarily constituted by a logo featuring the stylized African continent alongside the project's name. The project's logo has been deliberately designed to incorporate the colour scheme of the African Union and the European Union flags, serving to reflect the fundamental value of cooperation. This choice serves to visually emphasize the collaborative spirit of the project and the international partnership.

The logo is available in a variety of versions as presented in Figure 3. This is done to ensure adaptability and compatibility with different visual backgrounds, including colour, black, white, greyscale, and transparent variants. Each logo version is provided with and without the project name, in order to ensure consistency and adaptability in each format.

Figure 3 - DIGITAfrica logo variations

3.1.2.2 DIGITAfrica's colour scheme

As presented in Figure 4, the main colours associated with DIGITAfrica are green, gold yellow, and blue. As previously outlined, these colours reflect and incorporate the colour scheme of the African Union and European Union flags. In addition to the primary palette, two secondary shades of green are used: **light green** and **lime green,** which provide visual flexibility while maintaining consistency with the project's core identity.
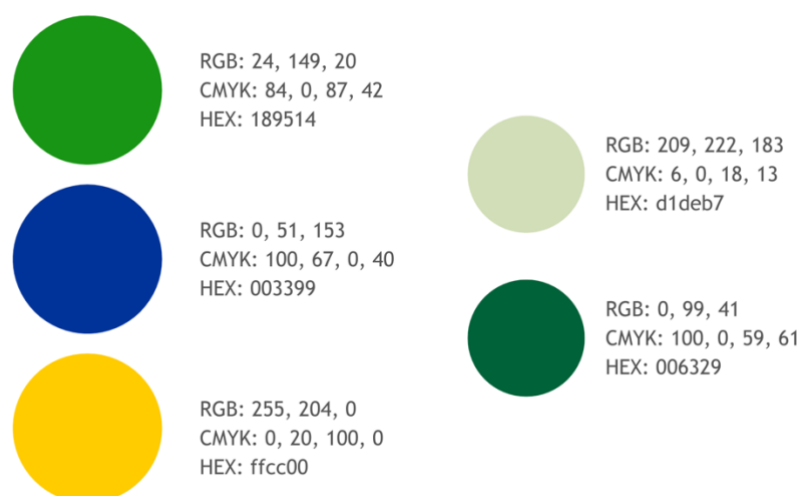
RGB: 24, 149, 20
CMYK: 84, 0, 87, 42
HEX: 189514

RGB: 209, 222, 183
CMYK: 6, 0, 18, 13
HEX: d1deb7

RGB: 0, 51, 153
CMYK: 100, 67, 0, 40
HEX: 003399

RGB: 0, 99, 41
CMYK: 100, 0, 59, 61
HEX: 006329

RGB: 255, 204, 0
CMYK: 0, 20, 100, 0
HEX: ffcc00

Figure 4 - DIGITAfrica colour scheme

3.1.2.3 DIGITAfrica Typography

The typography selected for headings is Century Gothic, a linear font that ensures clarity and immediate readability. Commonly available, it supports both print and digital use, contributing to a consistent and recognizable visual identity.

Century Gothic

Aa Bb Çç Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz
Aa Bb Çç Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz
Aa Bb Çç Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz
Aa Bb Çç Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz
Aa Bb Çç Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz
Aa Bb Çç Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

Figure 5 - Century Gothic font

For paragraphs and subheadings, Trebuchet MS was chosen to introduce typographic variety while maintaining balance and legibility.

Trebuchet MS

Aa Bb Çç Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz
Aa Bb Çç Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz
Aa Bb Çç Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz
Aa Bb Çç Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz
Aa Bb Çç Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz
Aa Bb Çç Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

Figure 6 - Trebuchet MS font

3.1.2.4 Templates

It is imperative that all partners adhere to the use of uniform templates when engaging in internal or external communication activities, including the preparation of materials such as deliverables, slide presentations and minutes. The templates have been designed in-house and are available to all partners on the shared DropSU folder.

The deliverable template adopted by the project is displayed in Figure 7.
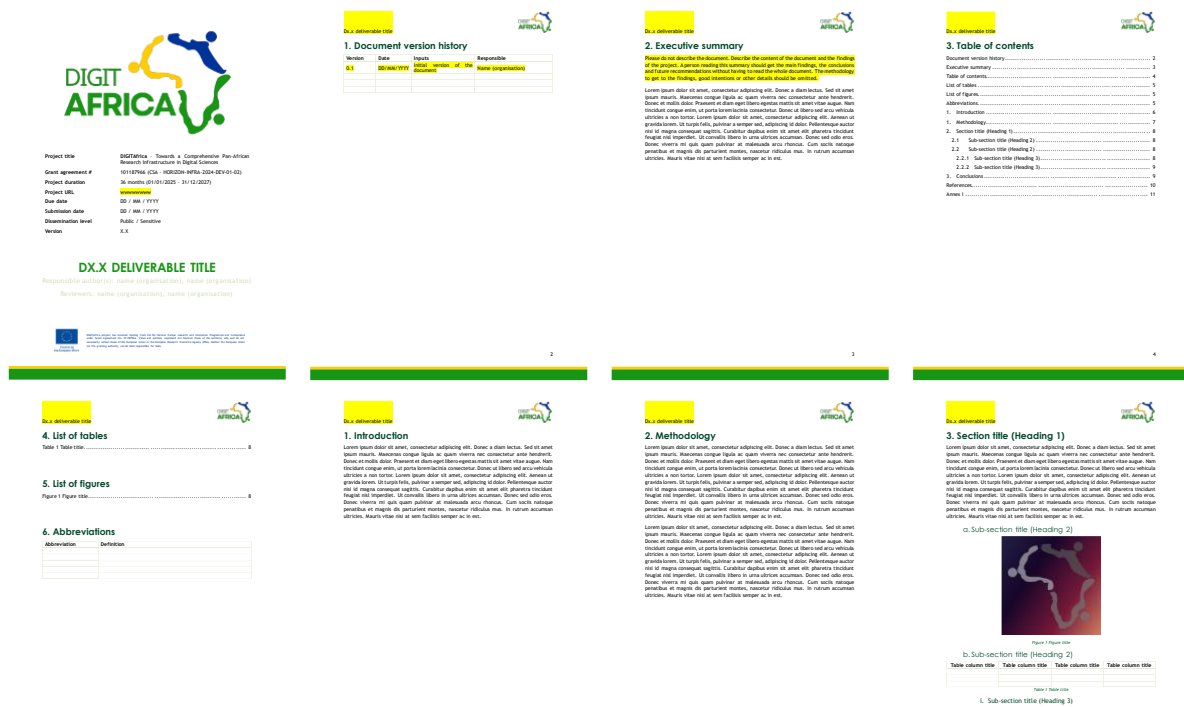
Figure 7 - DIGITAfrica Deliverable template

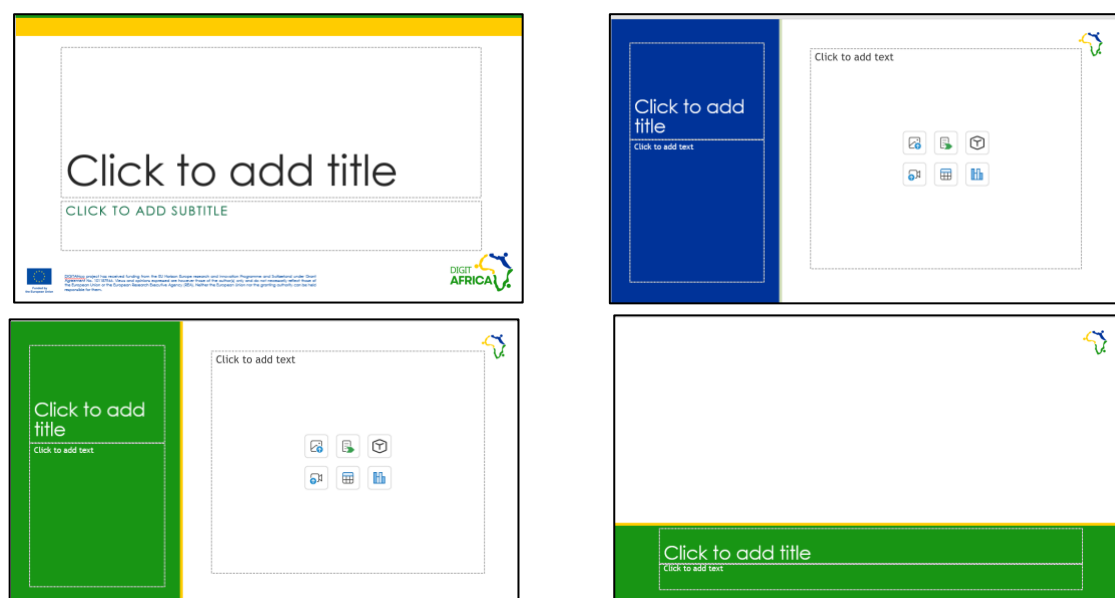The presentation template was developed in Microsoft PowerPoint and is illustrated in Figure 8.

Figure 8 - DIGITAfrica Presentation template

Finally, the following figure illustrates a template for meeting minutes, the purpose of which is to provide a consistent documentation of project discussions.
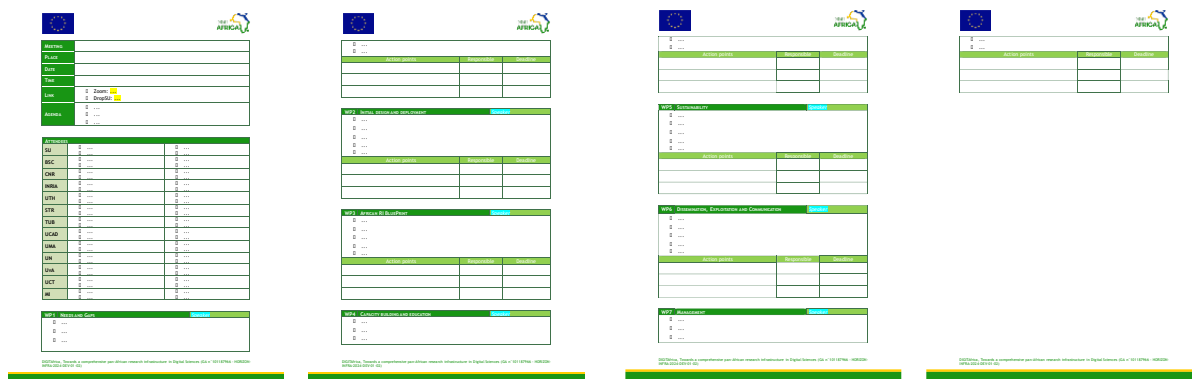

Figure 9 - DIGITAfrica Minutes template

3.1.2.5 Funding Acknowledgment and EU Emblem

DIGITAfrica partners, as stated in the Grant Agreement (art. 17) , must use the EU emblem and the accompanying text of "Co-funded by the European Union and Switzerland". The materials also include the Grant Agreement number 101187966) and when it should be referred.

3.1.3 Communication channel and tools

The communication strategy of the DIGITAfrica is implemented through a variety of channels and tools including the website, social media platforms, workshops and events, which detailed below.

3.1.3.1 Website

The DIGITAfrica website serves as the main digital resource for sharing information about the project. It is designed to offer the public a clear and accessible overview, complemented by regular updates on ongoing activities, results achieved, and key outcomes. Particular attention has been paid to the platform's usability to ensure smooth and intuitive navigation, and the use of the Project colours. The pattern of waves in the Homepage was chosen to depict dynamism, with tech-inspired motifs in the background.

The website is structured into the following sections:

- Home (see Figure 10)
- Project
- Partners
- Work Packages
- Blueprint
- News & Events
  - News

- o Events
- Outcomes and Resources
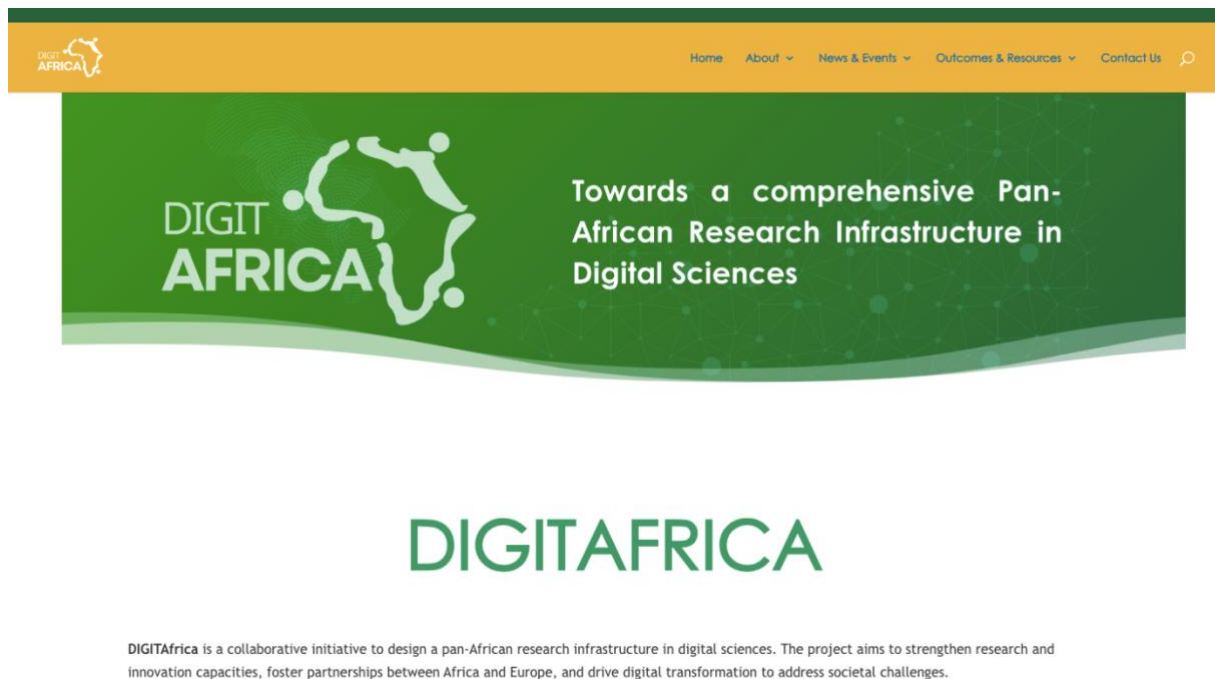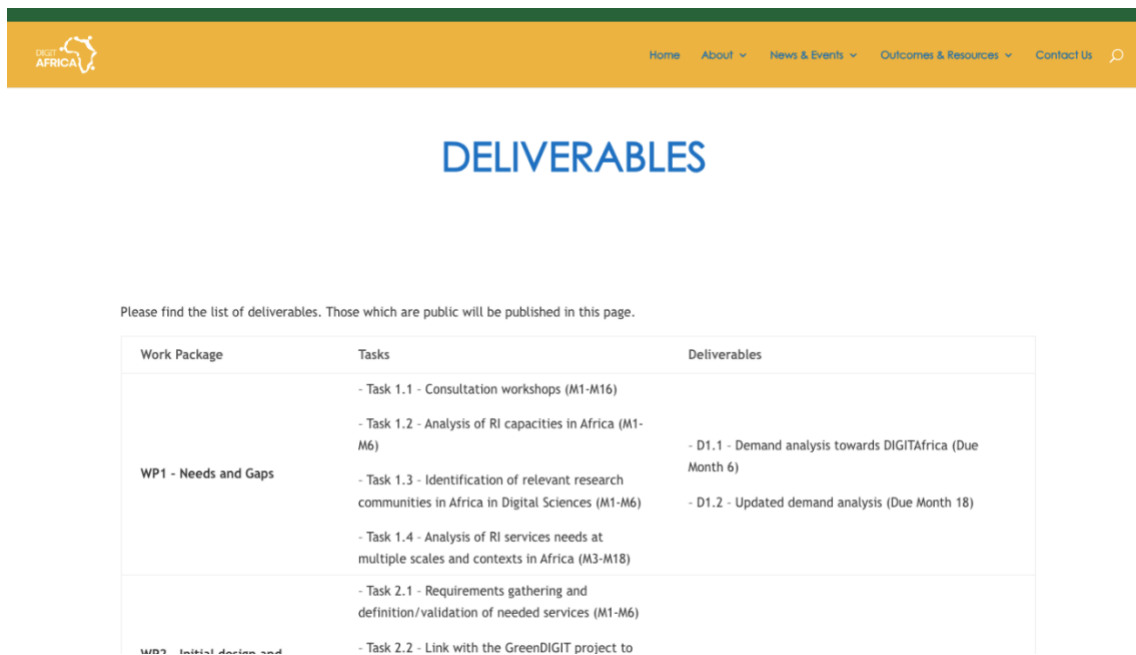 - o Project Deliverables (see Figure 11)
- Contact

Figure 10 - DIGITAfrica website: Home page

Figure 11 - DIGITAfrica website: List of Work Packages and the respective deliverables

3.1.3.2 Workshops

Workshops are defined as brief yet intensive educational programmes designed for groups of people to develop specific skills or knowledge. In the context of the DIGITAfrica project, the organization of workshops will be conducted in both internal and external capacities. The purpose of internal workshops is to promote active engagement among partners, facilitate constructive and interactive dialogue around potential challenges, and support the coordination of strategies and future actions. While the objective of external workshops is to engage a wider audience, including relevant stakeholders, and to raise awareness of the project, its concepts, and how these can be implemented.

DIGITAfrica Inaugural Workshop

On 23 April 2025, the thirteen DIGITAfrica partners convened for their inaugural in-person meeting in Cape Town, South Africa, hosted by the University of Cape Town. The event marked the official beginning of the project's scientific and dissemination activities, and it was followed by a two-day workshop.

Representatives from the European Commission and European Research Executive Agency (REA) provided insight into international collaboration and project management. In the context of the meeting, partners shared updates on their work, discussed challenges and opportunities, and defined short- and medium-term goals.

The meeting established the foundation for coordinated efforts on blueprints, capacity building, stakeholder engagement, and outreach strategies. Furthermore, the necessity of aligning efforts to address research infrastructure challenges across African partner countries and prospective future members was highlighted.

Figure 12 - DIGITAfrica Inaugural Workshop (23 April 2025)

The inaugural meeting was followed by an international workshop (April 24, 2025) and a practical session on the University of Cape Town campus (April 25, 2025), which represented two days of collaborative dialogue, training, and technical demonstration.

Figure 13 - DIGITAfrica launches in Cape Town (24-25 April 2025)

DIGITAfrica Future Workshops

Under Work Package 1 (Needs and Gaps), led by CNR and UMA, three consultation workshops will engage African and EU partners to identify community needs, map existing capacities, and refine the project's mission. Two workshops will support the analysis phase, while the third will consolidate findings.

In addition to the inaugural workshop (April 2025), two more stakeholder workshops will be organized to build dialogue with civil society and industry, focusing on digital literacy, critical thinking, and AI.

As part of Work Package 4, DIGITAfrica will also deliver training courses, workshops, and seasonal schools, including a winter school in Africa for around forty participants. African partners will also be invited to attend SLICES and SoBigData summer schools, supported by external travel grants.

To coordinate the project, eight plenary meetings will take place over three years—**three in Africa, two in Europe, and three online**. In-person meetings will be combined with workshops and WP-specific sessions to optimise travel and resources and foster dissemination and communication.

Social Media

The use of multiple social media platforms provides an effective means for dynamic and interactive engagement with a diverse range of target groups. These channels serve as

effective instruments to enhance the visibility of DIGITAfrica and its associated activities, facilitating exposure to an audience that might not otherwise encounter the project.

The DIGITAfrica communication strategy is currently focused on the use of LinkedIn and YouTube, as these platforms are considered the most effective for reaching the target audiences and promoting the project's activities and outcomes. From the outset, the consortium decided not to include X (former Twitter) among the active communication channels. This decision was based on a shift in the platform's direction, including the removal of certain safeguards and a noticeable decline in user engagement. As for YouTube, the creation of the channel will follow the recording of the first videos.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn represents a powerful tool for establishing connections with professional networks that are interested in project developments. The communication and dissemination of DIGITAfrica activities will be achieved through the sharing of posts and news, thereby facilitating an interactive dialogue with a wide audience.

MI has created the DIGITAfrica LinkedIn page. Consortium members are encouraged to share and interact with the posts, and to invite their connections to follow DIGITAfrica. MI will continue to post regularly, ensuring that updates and improvements are made, while adhering to the following rules:

- Mentioning partners/people/projects using @ wherever possible to enhance the reach of the content and encourage shares
- Use of hashtags: the most relevant hashtags with the most interactions will be actively searched for in order to promote the posts. Some examples include #DIGITAfrica, #ResearchInfrastructure, #DigitalScience
- To increase interaction, posts should make strategic use of images, emojis, prompts, and shortened links.
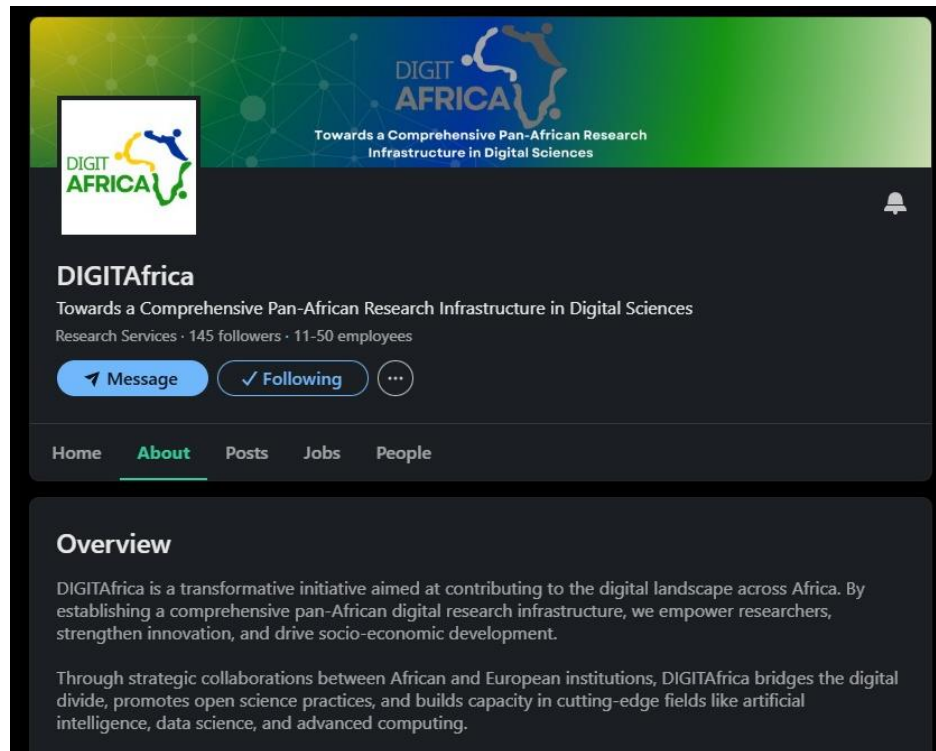
Figure 14 - DIGITAfrica LinkedIn

YouTube

The use of YouTube will play an integral role in the project's communication strategy, serving as a key platform to amplify its impact and reach a wider audience. A dedicated channel will be created to support the dissemination of audiovisual materials. In line with prior agreements, a series of videos will be developed in close collaboration with project partners. These will include short testimonial videos featuring contributions from partner, as well as a dedicated campaign to promote women in STEM.

3.1.3.3 Conferences and events

As part of the dissemination strategy, DIGITAfrica has collated a register of relevant conferences and events with which to engage. In order to facilitate effective communication regarding the project during these events, a set of promotional materials has been prepared for diverse scenarios.

QR Code

A QR code linking directly to the DIGITAfrica website has been developed by MI, and it has been uploaded to the shared drive, making it easily accessible and shareable by all project partners. The QR code will be integrated into various promotional materials to enhance visibility and outreach.
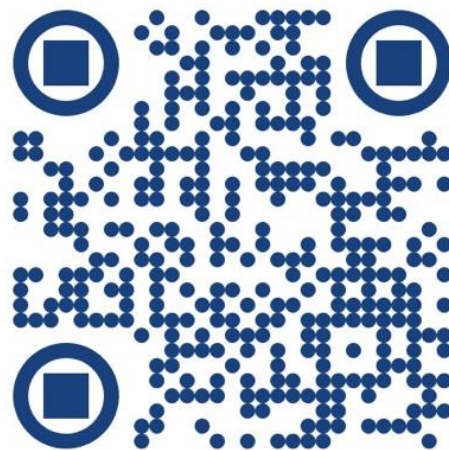
Figure 15 - DIGITAfrica QR Code

Flyer

Three versions of flyer have been created by MI in A5 format, containing key information about DIGITAfrica aimed at reaching a broad range of target audiences. The flyers are available on the shared drive and accessible to all partners

Figure 16 - DIGITAfrica Flyers

MI developed a preliminary rollup concept with the objective of increasing the communication impact of the project during external events, including conferences, workshops and seminars. The following figure illustrates the design concept.

Figure 17 - DIGITAfrica Roll Up

4 Strategy for dissemination

The primary objective of the DIGITAfrica dissemination strategy is to ensure a significant impact and the active engagement of a targeted multidisciplinary community through the sharing of knowledge and research outcomes. Following the approval of consortium members, research results will be disseminated to relevant target groups via the following channels:

- Training and education
- Publication of scientific papers and articles
- Policy engagement
- Attendance to conferences and events

In order to monitor the project's progress and establish a general direction for dissemination activities, a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been identified. The following table displays these indicators:

Measure and target groups	Indicators	Target
DIGITAfrica Winter School (TG: 1, 4, 9)	No. of participants	1 Winter School, 40 participants

Scientific publications (TG: 1, 2, 4, 5)	No. of peer-reviewed papers/articles	3 in total
DIGITAfrica policy briefs (TG: 2, 3, 6, 7)	No. of policy briefs issued	3 policy briefs and 1 white paper
DIGITAfrica policy briefs (TG: 2, 3, 6, 7)	No. of participants and policy level of the participants	30 participants from at least 5 AU countries, incl. at least 5 policy makers of Ministry level of 5 AU countries
Presentations and demos (TG: All)	No. of presentations and demos made and n° of keynotes at conferences	At least 3 pres. per year and 1 demo per year / 2 Keynotes at conf.
External events (TG: All)	No. of events attended	30 external events

Table 4 - Key performance Indicators

It should be noted that the information provided above may evolve in accordance with the project's development. As part of WP6, MI is responsible for monitoring the dissemination strategy. For that, MI has established a dissemination/publication list that partners will update accordingly (see section 4.1). The evaluation and monitoring of these KPI will also take place on regular meetings held by the Work Package 6. However, each consortium member is expected to contribute to the maximization of impact by disseminating project results through the defined channels.

4.1 Conference and Events

It is important to note that conferences, symposiums, and similar events represent key opportunities to disseminate DIGITAfrica's achievements and project outcomes. Events of this nature typically attract a diverse range of target audiences. In this matter, a specific document was generated by MI. The purpose of the spreadsheet titled "*Events*" is to monitor attendance at potential conferences and events during the duration of the project. The following fields are to be completed by participants:

- Dissemination activity (name of event or equivalent)
- Description of dissemination activity
- Type (conference, workshop, etc.)
- Dates
- Location
- URL (if applicable)
- Focus / target stakeholders
- Partner(s) involved
- Status (completed / upcoming)
- Comments

The file is made available on the shared drive at the disposal of each consortium members.

4.1.1 Past Event

From 28 to 30 May 2025, partners of DIGITAfrica, including the Sorbonne University and the University of Cape Town, participated in an event organised by the Research Council of Zimbabwe (RCZ) as representatives of the project. The event was hosted at the Regency Fairmile Hotel, which is located in Gweru, Zimbabwe. The three-day programme encompassed a range of topics, including research management, with a particular emphasis on research, science, technology, innovation systems and capacity building.

From 22 to 28 June 2025, several partners (CNR, UCT) of DIGITAfrica attended the SoBigData Summer School, organised in Baratti (Italy). Two students from UCAD and SU received a travel grant from the summer school to attend the event. The goal of the Summer School was to provide researchers, data scientists, and social scientists with the tools and knowledge needed to tackle intricate societal issues.

From 25 to 27 June 2025, various partners of DIGITAfrica, including SU, UvA, Inria, UTH, CNR, and UCT, participated in the SLICES-CONVERGE Summer School held in Porto, Portugal. Two students from UCT were awarded travel grants to join the event. The central focus of this three-day summer school was "Hands-on 6G: Accelerating Innovation through Open Architectures and Advanced Testbeds."

4.1.2 Upcoming Conferences and Events

As part of the dissemination strategy, DIGITAfrica has initiated the compilation of a register of relevant conferences and events with which to engage throughout the project's duration. While the remaining workshops, winter school and courses are being organized, partners are also taking part or organizing events in which the project is highlighted and mentioned.

For instance, Mandat International is part of the organizing committee of the annual international conference Privacy Symposium, which is dedicated to the field of data governance, regulatory compliance, and innovative technologies. As part of its activities, Mandat usually shares the portfolio of the different research project in which it is a part.

The BSC also organizes the PUMPS BSC is organizing again the PUMPS+AI 2025 (ACM*) Summer School. This year event will take place from 14 to 18 July 2025.

4.2 Publications

It is expected that consortium members will submit publications to esteemed and impactful journals, magazines, and international conferences as a means to ensure the dissemination of DIGITAfrica research outcomes. DIGITAfrica partners are encouraged to facilitate open access to research publications in order to encourage knowledge sharing, collaboration, and

innovation. Open data will align with FAIR principles[2] and published in platforms such as Zenodo and OpenAire. Deliverable 6.2 (Data Management Plan) delineates both the obligations and goals of partners to share open data.

A specific document was generated by MI, the objective of which was to monitor publications. The spreadsheet, titled "*Publications*", contains the following fields that are to be completed by the authors:

- Type of Persistent Identifier (PID)
- Publication title
- Publication type (journal, article, chapter, etc.)
- Title of journal, publisher or equivalent
- Link to publication (if available)
- Authors
- Partners involved
- Status
- Comments

The spreadsheet is made available on the shared drive for every consortium member.

5 Strategy for Exploitation

The aim of the exploitation strategy is to ensure the sustainability of DIGITAfrica beyond the project's duration, by the target audiences' engagement and promoting the integration of project knowledge. The exploitation strategy is closely aligned with dissemination and communication measures, contributing to the long-term relevance and impact of the initiative. To support the long-term sustainability and effective exploitation of DIGITAfrica outcomes, the project follows a set of guiding principles aimed at strengthening engagement with key target groups:

- **Building long-term relationships and trust**: DIGITAfrica will foster lasting connections across research, academia, and industry by demonstrating credibility and leveraging the expertise of its partners. This includes promoting project results in ways that are aligned with the expectations and needs of relevant communities, and in respect of the Global Code of Conduct for Equitable Research Partnerships[3].

- **Tailored, multi-channel engagement**: Exploitation efforts will include personalized and multi-channel communication to ensure that messages reach the appropriate audiences in a relevant and accessible way, increasing the likelihood of adoption and collaboration.

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[2] Wilkinson, M. D., Dumontier, M., Aalbersberg, I. J., Appleton, G., Axton, M., Baak, A., ... & Mons, B. (2016). The FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship. Scientific data, 3(1), 1-9.
[3] TRUST (2018) The TRUST Code – A Global Code of Conduct for Equitable Research Partnerships, DOI: https://doi.org/10.48508/GCC/2018.05

- **Empowerment and mutual benefit**: DIGITAfrica aims to create an enabling environment for stakeholders to actively participate in shaping and using the research infrastructure. By supporting their digital transformation efforts, the project promotes shared value and encourages continued use and expansion of its tools and approaches.

In accordance with the DIGITAfrica exploitation strategy, specific routes have been identified in order to ensure the project's Key Results (KRs). For each result, the target groups to be addressed (WHO) and the channels or tools to be used (HOW) have been defined. The following table provides a concise summary of the relevant elements.

WHAT Key Results / Intended Outcomes	HOW Route for dissemination and exploitation	WHO Target Group
(KR1) Design study of a sustainable pan-African DIGITAfrica RI	High-level policy forum, policy briefs, scientific publication, keynotes, website, etc.	AU MS; EU ESFRI and HE, R&D departments from industry and SME; Scientific and research community
(KR2) DIGITAfrica network of African Research and innovation nodes, with a MoU and a research agenda between AU countries and with SLICES and SoBigData	High-level policy forum, policy briefs, scientific publication, keynotes, website, etc.	AU MS; EU ESFRI and HE, R&D departments from industry and SME; Scientific and research community.
(KR3) DIGITAfrica capacity-building portfolio	Distribute to all partners universities and to a maximum number of universities through Africa, make available on the websites of DIGITAfrica, SLICES and SoBigData, and include a summary in a policy brief	Scientific and research community; Female and young researchers, General public
(KR4) Guidelines female and young researchers	Distribute to AU high level policy Forum and to AU universities, make available on the websites of DIGITAfrica, SLICES and SoBigData, and include a summary in a policy brief.	National, AU, and EU regulators; Scientific and research community; Female and young researchers; General public
(KR5) BluePrint cooperation platform, prefiguring the potential DIGITAfrica RI	Establish partnerships with AU universities and research institutions to disseminate the tailored BluePrint; make it fully available on the website; SLICES/SoBigData are open for use by researchers/students in Africa to support networking and BluePrint enhancement	Scientific and research community

Table 5 - Key Results Indicators

5.1 Internal partner exploitation plans

In order to facilitate the formulation of a successful exploitation plan for the results of the DIGITAfrica project, a survey was provided from MI to all consortium partners. While it is acknowledged that, at this stage of the project, not all results have been fully defined, the purpose of the survey was to collect initial insights from each partner regarding their expected exploitation strategies.

The information gathered will serve as the basis for the development and refinement of the overall exploitation plan of DIGITAfrica.

The following table provides an overview of the survey's key insights, which have been collated from several of the partner to date.

Partner	Initial exploitation strategies overview
BSC	Key insights from the blueprint process will be shared at major policy and academic events in Africa and Europe. Governance and ethics recommendations will be disseminated through targeted briefings and workshops. Co-created stakeholder models will be refined and applied in future research and capacity-building initiatives.
CNR	Training initiatives targeting students and young researchers through programmes such as summer schools and tailored modules to support experimental research on the DIGITAfrica RI. Blueprints intended for consortium partners and external stakeholders active in data mining, AI/ML, mobile networking, and distributed computing.
INRIA	INRIA will exploit DIGITAfrica's results through scientific publications, workshops and conferences.
MI	As a non-profit foundation, MI will exploit project results particularly through the pursuit of future research actions which intertwine the objectives of DIGITAfrica, such as RI and research in Africa
SU	SU has played a key role in Europe in the design and operation of research infrastructures in this domain (PlanetLab, Onelab, FIT) and has led the ESFRI SLICES initiative, which aims to enhance Europe's competitive position. This initiative will increase the visibility and influence of SU, both nationally and internationally, particularly in the area of large-scale digital research infrastructures (RIs). The goal of SU in the DIGITAfrica project is to encourage collaboration with Africa in the field of RIs and to provide access to the infrastructures and services developed by SLICES-RI. In addition, SU is bringing its strong ties with international peers in the US and Asia. In addition, SU will promote Openscience and FAIR access to research data.
STR	A server will be installed in the STR Data Centre by M10 to support a Virtual Private Cloud for students and researchers (M11–M24), later extended to regional training (M25+). Software modules for service billing and QoS in beyond-5G infrastructure will be developed and released open source (first release M12, quarterly updates to M30). A micro-credentials curriculum in digital sciences and related course materials will also be developed with input from academia and industry.
TUB	TUB Berlin will exploit DIGITAfrica by advancing its Open6GNet and Open6GRIT platforms to foster research collaboration, community engagement, and technical knowledge sharing. It will deploy nomadic 5G/6G testbeds and demonstrators for education and research use, while anonymised experimental data will support academic dissemination. Workshops and hands-on training materials will target students, researchers, and policymakers, with roll-out beginning in Y2 and expanding in Y3.

UN	Curriculum updates and micro-credit opportunities will be explored following the development of initial courses. An in-person training will be organized for students and researchers to make use of the infrastructure developed during the project.
UCAD	Research infrastructure capacities in Senegal, including catalogues and key challenges. Contribution to the design and testing of the pan-African Blueprint. Deployment of services for capacity building and modular training. Skills development via updated curricula and faculty training. Target beneficiaries include students, researchers, NGOs, and digital science networks.
UCT	Curated datasets and design blueprints will be published in open repositories (e.g. Zenodo, UCT Ziva) to support both research and policy toolkits. Software tools adapted to the DIGITAfrica context will be released under open licenses, with documentation for wider adoption. Experimental data from pilots will be anonymized and used for validation and training. Training modules on sustainable RI and federated systems will be delivered via master's courses and workshops.
UTH	UTH participates in ESFRI SLICES initiative, which aims to enhance Europe's competitive position relative to the US and China. UTH is leading the SLICES Greek node, aiming to increase its visibility and influence in national and European level. The expansion of the activities and the scientific collaboration with African organisation will enhance the position of UTH in the international research arena and will facilitate new research pathways and new research activities in horizontal and vertical sectors.
UVA	The University of Amsterdam (UvA) will integrate DIGITAfrica outputs into its long-term professional education and lifelong learning initiatives. It will promote these through Dutch and European training networks (e.g., SURF, eScience Center) and expand adoption via collaborations with African universities.

Table 6 – Partner's Exploitation Perspective

6 Conclusions

This initial Dissemination, Exploitation, and Communication (DEC) Plan outlines the strategic framework guiding DIGITAfrica's engagement activities, developed under Work Package 6 and coordinated by Mandat International (MI) as part of Task 6.1. It serves as a preliminary reference document, aligning project activities with methodologies and objectives that support visibility, impact, and sustainability across the continent.

This living document will evolve with the project's progress, and its second version, due in June 2026 (M18), will report on achievements and refine strategic actions. On December 2027, the final DEC Report will be produced. Ultimately, the DEC plan is integral to DIGITAfrica's broader mission of enhancing human and research capacities, promoting Euro-African cooperation, and supporting a digitally inclusive and prosperous African future.

7 Annex I – Survey on Exploitation

Introduction

Dear partners, in order to pave the way to a successful exploitation plan of the DIGITAfrica results, we need your inputs. We are aware that as a research project, not all results are identified yet, but we would like to get from each partner a clear description of your expected exploitation plans. The results of this survey will be used to analyze and report on the exploitation strategy. The form has to be sent to:

Partner name:

Person of contact name:

Person of contact email:

Person of contact phone number:

Part A – Partner perspective

1. **What types of exploitable outcomes do you anticipate generating within the scope of DIGITAfrica?**

    a. Research infrastructure (e.g., datasets, repositories, facilities)

    b. Scientific software and/or hardware tools

    c. Experimental data

    d. Other

2. **How do you intend to exploit these outcomes?**

Indicate which modes of exploitation apply and briefly explain your rationale:

    a. Individually (by your organization or team)

    b. Collectively (with DIGITAfrica partners or consortium)

    c. Through third parties (e.g., commercial entities, NGOs, public bodies)

3. **What is your detailed exploitation strategy for each type of outcome listed in question 1?**

Describe your intended steps, potential users or stakeholders, and expected timelines.

1. **Which dissemination and exploitation channels do you plan to prioritize?**

   Examples include face-to-face meetings, stakeholder workshops, academic conferences, online platforms, policy forums, or publications.

5. **How do you plan to ensure long-term accessibility and sustainability of the exploitable results?**

   Consider aspects such as open access, maintenance responsibilities, licensing models, or hosting arrangements.

6. **How do you plan to involve female and young researchers in your activities?**

Part B – Project Perspective

1. Which research domains are most likely to benefit from the DIGITAfrica infrastructure?

2. How do you envision utilizing the DIGITAfrica research infrastructure in your future work?

3. What potential revenue streams could be leveraged to support the ongoing development and sustainability of DIGITAfrica?

4. Who are the potential stakeholders or user groups that might be willing to pay for access to DIGITAfrica-related services or resources?

5. Are you interested in integrating or applying DIGITAfrica results within other Research Infrastructures? If so, which ones and how?

Do you anticipate fostering synergies or collaborations between DIGITAfrica and other Research Infrastructures or projects within your organization? If yes, please specify which ones.