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African Open Science Platform - Towards a continental Open Science Vision

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Globally there is movement in the trajectory of developing a Global Open Science Cloud (GOSC) aimed at supporting research collaborations across continents to assist in addressing global science challenges - for example UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), climate change, infectious diseases, and coordination of global disaster risk reduction.

Continents, regions, and countries are also actively developing Open Science platforms and investing in underlying cyberinfrastructures to advance their Research Science Technology and Innovation (RSTI) ecosystems, enhance collaboration and increase their competitiveness and critically, use RSTI as a driver for national and continental priorities.

To this end, a discussion of the African Open Science Platform (AOSP) and progress in its development is given in this talk. AOSP aims to position African scientists at the cutting edge of data intensive science by stimulating interactivity and creating opportunity through the development of efficiencies of scale, building critical mass through shared capacities, amplifying impact through a commonality of purpose and voice, and to engage in Global Commons to address continental and global challenges through joint action

AOSP pilot study conducted an audit and provided frameworks to guide countries in the development of requisite policies, infrastructure, incentives, and human capital to facilitate leveraging of open science and open data amidst the digital revolution – with all the challenges and opportunities presented.

Furthermore, African regional blocks also have initiatives aligned with AOSP - for example, the Southern African Development Community Cyberinfrastructure Framework – (SADC CI) has been approved by Governments. It is currently supporting some regional projects and was consulted in the AOSP pilot project. The SADC CI facilitates a regional collaborative ecosystem for research, innovation, and teaching by creating a shared commons for data, computational platforms, and human capital development over a fabric of high-speed connectivity afforded by National Education and Research networks (NRENs)

AOSP provides avenues and a trajectory towards developing a Pan African cyberinfrastructure to support advancement of the continent's science enterprise through open science and open data. Furthermore, such cyberinfrastructure will promote collaboration and support addressing higher-level African priority areas and challenges through leveraging the medium of research, science, technology and innovation, and thereby contribute to African advancement and integration to help deliver on the African vision - Agenda 2063 - The Africa We Want

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