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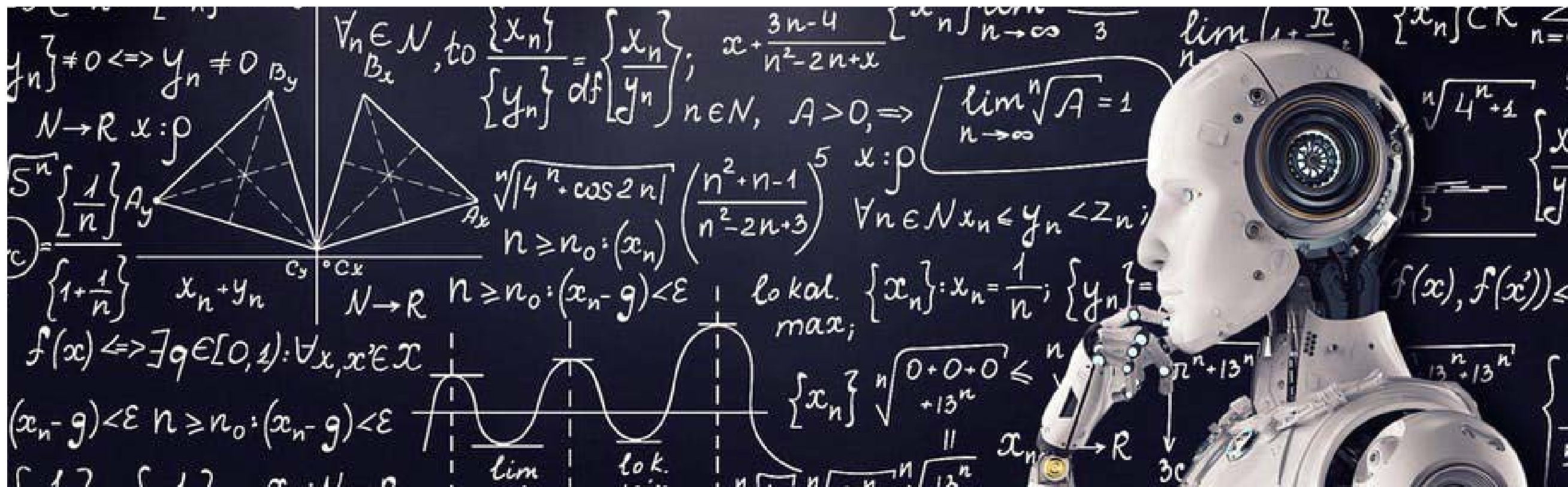
INTELLIGENCE **S**EMEN

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE : A catalyst for education in Africa

Par William NGHORI



In the current context of digitalization, African nations, supported by international entities, are placing digital development at the heart of their continental strategies, catalyzing the transformation of education.

During the pandemic, the closure of schools, dictated by WHO guidelines, revealed the inadequacy of resources for distance learning, exacerbating dependence on external funding.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), SCHOOLAP offers a digital solution with over 23,361 online educational resources for teachers and students, accessible via web and mobile, in video and text formats. Parents and school administrators use the platform to track student progress and interact with teachers.

In Nigeria, MAVIS COMPUTEL introduced MAVIS TALKING BOOK, an anti-literacy device adapted to regions without electricity, equipped with rechargeable batteries, facilitating access to new information and communication technologies (NICT) in rural areas.

ENEZA Education, in Côte d'Ivoire, has launched a mobile application enabling students to revise and prepare for exams, with automatically corrected exercises, an initiative welcomed by the Ministry of Education.

Digital advances in Africa therefore represent a lever for educational reform, alleviating the shortage of teaching resources and teaching staff, and improving the governance of education systems. Artificial intelligence plays a key role in compensating for educational shortcomings, particularly in remote areas.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH : Pillar of Economic Progress in Africa

By Laetitia MAKITA-NGADI



At the sixth summit between the European Union and the African Union in Brussels, the focus was on research and innovation as key drivers of development and cooperation in Africa. These areas are seen as catalysts for progress, and are vital for tackling global challenges such as climate change, population growth and economic recovery.

Research is a strategic tool for African decision-makers, enabling them to align their national plans with economic and institutional realities. It is also crucial for development funding agencies in Africa, who rely on in-depth studies to tailor their projects to the specific needs of beneficiary countries.

Faced with desertification and the challenges of isolated rural areas, scientific research offers practical solutions for establishing sustainable development mechanisms.

The international congress on the desert economy in Morocco, which brings together researchers from a variety of disciplines, aims to present relevant studies and formulate recommendations for African leaders and donors.

According to UNESCO, Côte d'Ivoire and Kenya, with their advanced scientific and technological bases, could become poles of excellence in science and technology education, contributing significantly to African development and the evolution of continental infrastructures.

In Uganda, the government has allocated \$8.8 million to research into COVID-19 treatment, resulting in innovations such as COVIDEX, mobile hospital tents and a disease notification system.

AFRICA : COP and strategic energy transition

By Laetitia MAKITA-NGADI

The African Energy Technology Conference in Accra brought together African and international leaders to discuss the adoption of advanced energy technologies and policy integration for an equitable energy transition. Faced with an energy deficit affecting businesses and homes alike, Africa is actively exploring renewable energies to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

With 600 million Africans without access to electricity and a predominance of fossil fuels, the continent's decision-makers are facing international pressure to accelerate the transition to renewable energies, in line with commitments made at COP conferences.

The African energy market is undergoing a major transformation, driven by COP resolutions and the adoption of policies favoring renewable energies to reduce dependence on fossil fuels. However, this transition is being challenged by the need to revive post-COVID-19 economic growth.

Energy projects in Africa are attracting many Western investors and banks, despite their commitment to achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. Currently, 5,000 investors own stakes in companies involved in fossil fuels on the continent.

According to a Bloomberg report presented at COP 27, investment in renewable energies in Africa has fallen by 30%, despite considerable potential, contrasting with a 9% increase worldwide. Only \$2.6 billion has been invested in renewable projects such as wind, solar and geothermal power.

Africa accounts for just 0.6% of the \$434 billion invested globally in renewable energies. Most of the continent's power generation is based on expensive, polluting fossil fuels. Significant investments in renewable energies are concentrated mainly in Kenya, South Africa, Egypt and Morocco.



DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY: Driving Africa's economic revival

By William NGHORI



In the wake of the COVID-19 crisis, African leaders have realized the importance of digitalization in revitalizing their national economies and optimizing tax revenue collection. Startups, in search of growth, are turning to investment funds, with a focus on the digital economy and financial inclusion.

The 2024 Finance Act introduces reforms targeting the modernization of customs and tax procedures, aimed at securing public revenues and simplifying transactions for users. Digitalization promises benefits such as

simplified customs clearance processes, adapted information and communication technologies, and extended import VAT exemptions.

The AZUR INNOVATION FUND has invested \$1.5 million in Moroccan fintech TOOKEZ to boost its expansion in Africa, the Middle East and, more specifically, Morocco. TOOKEZ aims to reinvent the loyalty program ecosystem and become a central point of digital inclusion between consumers and brands. These funds should accelerate its development, particularly in the application of blockchain technology.

As part of regional digital integration in West Africa, the World Bank has allocated \$20 million to the SMART AFRICA Digital Academy to train a new generation of decision-makers and regulators capable of driving digital transformation. This initiative aims to bridge the digital skills gap in Africa, with the objective of training 30,000 qualified individuals, having already trained 7,000 beneficiaries.

Mastercard and MTN Group Fintech have entered into a strategic partnership to promote financial inclusion, sharing a common vision of economic empowerment. With a database of 290 million subscribers and a low rate of bank penetration in Africa, mobile payment is emerging as a powerful tool, adapted to the continent's existing infrastructures.