Carnegie Mellon University Africa

Minutes of the CSSR4Africa Team Meeting

Date and Time: November 24, 2025, at 10:00 am (CAT)
Venue: Room No. C210.
Status: Final.

Participants
Clifford Onyonka, Chairman
Prof. Assane Gueye
Deogratius Kiggude
Ibrahim Jimoh
Lenah Chacha
Muhammed Danso
Richard Muhirwa
Yohannes Haile

Apologies
Birhanu Shimelis Girma
Tsegazeab Tefferi

The Committee members discussed all the items on the meeting agenda. These discussions are summarized below.

1. Approval of the minutes of the last meeting

Clifford Onyonka welcomed the team members and noted that Birhanu Shimelis Girma and Tsegazeab Tefferi were unable to attend the meeting. Yohannes Haile took the minutes.

The participants reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17th November 2025 and approved them as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

2. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising.

Agenda Item 1: Update D6.1 with new enhancements.
Status: Removed
   Action: The task is removed after Muhammed explained that there are, in fact, no updates to be made in the D6.1.

Agenda item 2: Write the ROS2 software installation manual.
Status: **Complete**

Agenda item 3: Friday Demo showing progress so far.
Status: Incomplete.
   Action: The demo was demonstrated, but several issues need to be fixed.

Agenda item 4: Provide the team with a Wi-Fi dongle.
Status: Deferred
   Action: Yohannes will be asking when they need the dongle later on for the DEC project.

Agenda item 5: Give team access to CMU IoT network.
Status: Incomplete
   Action: Lenah will be talking to the team responsible.

3. Matters arising from progress reports.

Muhammed explained the issue regarding behaviorController. The fact that the code isn't working when trying to run the demo. He explained that behaviorController is designed to allow the user to provide an XML file, based on which it is supposed to operate, whether for the Tour for Robotics Lab or the Digital Experience Center. In addition, he added that Tsegazeab reported that concurrent execution isn't possible, but it is possible using asynchronous actions. He noted that some of the ROS services must be changed to ROS actions to work. Furthermore, Yohannes added that the laptop designated for the Pepper Tour is now being used actively for developing and testing code. Hence, it made it difficult to get the latest working version of the node. For that, he proposed working on a different laptop for DEC so that we could separate the code that is developed for the two projects.

Lenah explained that the team should maintain separate main, devel, and staging branches on GitHub. This structure ensures that we can safely test new updates, and if an issue arises, we can easily revert to a stable earlier version of the code.

4. Status of tasks, deliverables, and software

Clifford noted that some of the software installations have issues, and he has addressed the respective individuals to resolve those issues.

5. Milestones.

The team decided to document the necessary steps to run the Pepper Robot Tour demo for those without even robotics experience who could run the demo easily.

6. CSSR4Africa demo

Lenah asked why the demo depends on only one person. Prof Assane added that the team is running multiple commands in different terminals to run the demo, adding that there should be a single script to run the whole demo. We should make sure individual nodes are working, then test a pipeline of the nodes that are interconnected (e.g, Speech Event, LLM, text-to-speech). Then, if everything is working, we are going to work on a full demo.

Lenah asked about the issue with the speech event, where it wasn't responding while she was engaging with the Pepper Robot. Clifford explained that the issue is that Pepper is unable to capture the speech due to the background noise. He explained that he will be looking for models that are robust to work in background noise. Lenah noted that there could be multiple people speaking at the same time, hence the speech event must be robust enough.

Prof Assane has assigned Ibrahim, Danso, and Tsegazeab to work on the automation of the demo and fixing issues that are currently present during the demo. Ibrahim has asked if Prof. Assane could talk to with Team about collaboration due to the negative experiences he had working with him on the behavior Controller node.

7. Any Other Business

Deogratius has mentioned that he talked to Hannah regarding updating the contents of the website. He will be reaching out for content. There will be visitors coming this Friday.

8. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on December 1, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. in Room C210.

9. End of the Meeting

There being no other business, the Chairman thanked the participants for their contributions and closed the meeting.

Action items following the meeting of the CSSR4Africa project

Action	Action description	Responsible	Completion date
1	Individual Node Demo	Team	November 28, 2025

2	Updated the Software Installation Manual and Software Installation script.	Clifford	November 28, 2025
3	Give team access to the CMU IoT network	Lenah	November 28, 2025
4	Developing a single launch code for all the ROS Nodes	Tsegazeab, Muhammed, and Ibrahim	November 28, 2025
5	Visit by Gashora Girls Students	Team	November 28, 2025

Table 1: Action Items