

CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY AFRICA

Minutes of the CSSR4Africa Team Meeting

Date and Time: December 15, 2025
Venue: Room C210.
Status: Draft.

Participants

Birhanu Shimelis Girma
Clifford Onyonka, Chairman
Deogratius Kiggude
Muhammed Danso
Richard Muhirwa
Tsegazeab Tefferi
Yohannes Haile

Apologies

Assane Gueye
Ibrahim Jimoh

Clifford Onyonka welcomed the participants to the meeting and the Committee members then discussed all the items of the meeting agenda. Tsegazeab took the minutes. The discussions of the meeting are summarized below.

1. Approval of the minutes of the last meeting

The participants reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting held on December 8, 2025 and approved them as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

2. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising.

Agenda item 1: Talk to Johnson about the internet issues when downloading python packages

Action: Done.

Agenda item 2: Developing a single launch code for all the ROS Nodes

Action: Done.

Agenda item 3: Figure out how to achieve the ROS service based synchronization

Action: Not done.

3. Matters arising from progress reports.

The team agreed all was well with the items reported in the progress reports.

4. Status of tasks, deliverables, and software.

Clifford reported that all work is on track and no issues were identified. The team agreed.

5. Status of milestones.

The improved, fully interactive lab tour was successfully demonstrated on Friday, December 13. Clifford will update the project milestones accordingly. See Action Item 1.

For the three draft papers, it was noted that experimentation has either not yet started or is still in its early stages, and additional time is required to complete the drafts. Consequently, the internal deadline of December 15 has been extended to January 15, 2026. It should also be noted that the submission deadline for the 18th International Conference on Social Robotics is February 15, 2026.

6. Knowledge base to use for hand used in deictic gesturing.

Clifford noted ambiguity regarding which hand Pepper should use when performing a deictic gesture. The choice is between a static value specified in the Culture Knowledge Base and a dynamic value derived from the Environment Knowledge Base. Tsegazeab will investigate the rationale and implications of these two approaches and report back to the team. See Action Item 2.

7. Saving ROS node logs to file

Clifford noted that it had been suggested to him that, if the outputs of the various ROS nodes are not written to persistent storage, post hoc investigation of issues becomes significantly more difficult because a key source of evidence is missing. Accordingly, he proposed that each node be updated so that its logs are saved to a file. See Action Item 3.

In addition, Clifford will update deliverable D6.2 to include this logging improvement as one of the enhancements. See Action Item 4.

8. Failure handling progress

The failure-handling report has been available for team review for some time. Although the volume of feedback has been lower than anticipated, sufficient time has now passed, and the next phase will begin, implementing the recommendations outlined in the report.

9. Choosing next project manager

As Clifford's tenure approached its anticipated conclusion, in line with the tacitly understood and informally acknowledged two-month term, the team convened to discuss the transition in project management leadership. In doing so, the team surfaced a range of perspectives on who should come next, with several names and possibilities being raised in a manner that reflected different desires on who should be next. Different participants emphasized different factors, and while there was a shared understanding that the role required consistency and follow-through, there was less uniformity in which individual was seen as best positioned to embody them. As the discussion progressed, it became increasingly apparent that preferences were distributed across multiple options, with each option viewed as credible in some respects and less compelling in others, depending on the lens through which it was evaluated. Ultimately, the conversation concluded without a definitive agreement that was able to satisfy everyone.

10. Any other business.

Potential visit to the lab:

Deogratius mentioned that Nancy, CMU-Africa's Director of Community Engagement and Outreach, had informed him of a potential visit to the lab on Friday by school children, though, arrangements have not yet been made and formalized.

11. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday January 5, 2026 in C210 at 10AM CAT.

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	Update D6.2 to change expected date of the draft papers	C. Onyonka	January 15, 2026
2	Report to the team on deictic gesture options	T. Tefferi	January 11, 2026
3	Update the ROS nodes to include file logging	Everyone	January 11, 2026
4	Update D6.2 to include the file logging	C. Onyonka	January 11, 2026

Table 1: Action Items