

CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY AFRICA

Minutes of the CSSR4Africa Team Meeting

Date and Time: 14th July 2025, at 10:00am
Venue: C210.
Status: Final.

Participants

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

Apologies

Lenah Chacha

1. Introduction and review of agenda

Birhanu welcomed the team members to the meeting.

2. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

The participants reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting held on July 07, 2025 and approved them as a true and accurate record of the meeting. The status of the previous meetings action items are as follows:

Action item 1: T. Tefferi to send the failure handling report to the team

Action: *Not yet done, the report is to be distributed by Tsegazeab to the team on Wednesday 16th July*

Action item 2: Y. Haile to move the deliverable report to GitHub

Action: *Done, deliverable report updates to be done via GitHub instead of email*

Action item 3: B. Girma to send a calendar invite to Prof. Assane for the Monday meeting

Action: *Done*

Action item 4: B. Girma to select dates for the lab demonstration and send an email to the selected staff

Action: *Done, lab demos to be held on Tuesday 15th July and Thursday 17th July (calendar invites to be sent out today 14th July)*

Action item 5: A. Gueye to discuss the collaboration of Wits in the CSSR4Africa project with Prof Vernon

Action: *Done, the CMU-Africa team will continue to work on its assigned tasks as has been the case previously*

3. Matters arising from progress reports

Matters arising from the progress reports of 11th July 2025 discussed below in agenda 6, 7 and 8.

4. Status of tasks, deliverables, and software

Work is on-going to ensure that text-to-speech, robot navigation, and robot localization are integrated into GitHub by Friday 18th July 2025.

5. Status of milestones

Birhanu will update the milestones document on the wiki to indicate the updated date for lab tour demonstrations with integrated software, moving the date from 27th June 2025 to 25th July 2025.

6. Regarding Kinyarwanda TTS and data collection

Muhirwa is working on using Nari TTS and XTTS for CSSR4Africa's text-to-speech. Literature sources indicate that this new approach works better than the current approach being used in CSSR4Africa. The English model is available for download, and he will integrate it into the text-to-speech ROS node for testing with Pepper to evaluate its performance. He has contacted Digital Umuganda, who are working on the Kinyarwanda version, whose model he will use once they complete development.

CSSR4Africa's automatic speech recognition is also being worked on to use a keyword spotting model. Clifford informed the team that the English model available online from NVIDIA has already been integrated into speechEvent, but the Kinyarwanda model needs to be trained. Text-to-speech will be used to generate training data, and evaluation data will be collected from real human speakers. A paper detailing the dataset is also being targeted for publication. Prof. Assane informed the team that CMU-Africa and the Government of Rwanda have processes that need to be followed to ensure ethical data collection.

7. Pepper usage at Deep Learning Indaba Conference

Muhirwa has contacted the organisers of this conference. The organisers wish to use Pepper for demonstrations to the about 150 participants who have registered for these demonstrations. Muhirwa will connect the organisers to Yohannes to arrange on how to use Docker for running demonstrations in simulated environments and on the physical robot. Yohannes will in the meanwhile prepare Docker images for running the demonstrations in a simulated environment and on the physical robot. The organisers have also contacted Prof. Assane, and they have scheduled a meeting for today 14th July 2025.

8. Demo coordination for the selected staff

Demonstrations for selected staff are scheduled for Tuesday (2:00pm to 3:00pm) and Thursday (2:00pm to 3:00pm). 15 minutes prior to Tuesday's demonstration, Ibrahim will demonstrate robot localization to the team (separate from the main demonstrations to the staff).

9. Failure handling

Tsegazeab promised to send the failure handling report to the team on Wednesday 16th July 2025.

10. Any other business

No other business.

11. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on July 21, 2025 at 10:00AM 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	Failure handling report	T. Tefferi	July 16, 2025
2	Send calendar invites for CSSR4Africa demos to the staff	B. Shimelis	July 14, 2025
3	Update milestones to show updated date for integrated software demos	B. Shimelis	July 18, 2025
4	Internal demo for robot localization	I. Jimoh	July 15, 2025

Table 1: Action Items