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To manage the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) on the African continent, policymakers have to be proactive rather than reactive in shaping the future of AI policy

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There is this flawed perception that it is much too early for policymakers to start having serious discussions pertaining to the future of Artificial Intelligence (AI) policy, its implementation and the role and implications that AI will have on society at large, especially on the African continent. Like the rest of the world, it's become evident that the development and deployment of artificial intelligence will generate great opportunities for the African continent. The nature of AI development is already noticeable on the continent in countries, such as Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa. In light of this fact, it is imperative that policy analysts have to step into a proactive role rather than take a reactive stance in shaping the future of AI policy. The development of AI is evolving at an increasing pace globally and Africa faces its own unique challenges that will have to be addressed to ensure that AI technologies are utilized for the ultimate good of its citizens, so that they will obtain the maximum benefits thereof but also circumvent the perilous consequences of AI. The objective of this presentation is to showcase why a wait and see approach regarding the future of AI policy on the African continent is flawed? Why the crafting of the future of AI policy requires out-of-the-box strategic thinking and scenario forecasting done in collaboration, inclusive of policymakers, AI tech experts, government, academia, business, civil society, and other interested stakeholders in a bid to manage the rise of AI and its role in the continents overall economic development?

Biography

Cheryl-Anne Smith is an experienced Outreach Coordinator and Analyst Consultant with a demonstrated history of working in the information technology and services industry. She has worked on both small and large scale analytical projects that deal with a multitude of issues pertaining to Africa for both governmental and corporate clients. She is skilled in open source intelligence research, strategic forecasting, geopolitical risk and policy analysis, including qualitative and quantitative research and report writing. She holds a Masters of Philosophy degree specializing in Public Policy and Administration, an Honours degree in International Relations, and an undergraduate degree in Political Studies and Governance from the University of Cape Town, South Africa.

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