What is the Virus Outbreak Data Network (VODAN)?

VODAN is a GO FAIR Implementation Network set up to help fight the COVID-19 Corona virus, that is causing a worldwide epidemic. The Implementation Network VODAN is a step to establish the Internet of FAIR Data and Services.

FAIR stands for human and machine-readable digital data objects that are Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable. Accessibility is fully compliant with regulatory and governance frameworks, including personal data protection and ethical considerations based on the principle to Do no Harm.

Making data and metadata FAIR ensures that these data are discoverable on the Internet of FAIR Data and Services. Central to his approach is the establishment of FAIR Data Points (FDPs), for COVID-19 relevant digital data objects. Opening up FAIR (meta)data by publishing them on a FDP allows algorithms to search these (meta)data, looking for patterns. The Internet of FAIR Data and Services is a distributed data discovery network; data are NOT moved, but algorithms going over the internet can find the data.

ABOUT VODAN AFRICA & ASIA: Fighting the COVID-19 with FAIR Data

VODAN Africa is the Africa Implementation Network of Universities and Hospitals in Uganda, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Kenya, Tunisia and Zimbabwe; as well as Professors and graduate students from the University of Leiden supported by the GO FAIR Foundation. The initiative is funded by the Philips Foundation to enable distributed access to the critical data needed from Africa and the rest of the world to fight and contain the COVID-19 pandemic. The Virus Outbreak Data Africa Network will ensure that medical data are discoverable by computers and accessible under governance regulations. Data will not be displaced as data are visited by the algorithms based on the access accorded to the data by data stewards.
The Implementation Network for Africa is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor of Kampala International University, Dr. Mouhamed Mpezamihigo. Other partner universities include Moi University, and Tangaza University in Kenya; the Great Zimbabwe University, University de Sousse, Tunisia, and Olabisi Onabanjo University, Nigeria; Mekelle University and the Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia. The original VODAN Africa network was expanded to include partners from Indonesia, Kazakhstan and China on 27 October 2020 and the project renamed VODAN Africa and Asia.

The first step is the virtual Training for Trainers trajectory, free of charge and online on virtual platforms where data analysts will be guided to establish FAIR Data Points, to ensure data are linked and useable for global corona-relevant analytics, followed by AI powered data analytics.

**The VODAN-Africa: Tunisia’ Particularities**

Within five months after Virus Outbreak Data Network (VODAN-Africa) Initiative was launched in March 2020, the VODAN Africa team at Tunisia led by Dr Mariem Ghardallou and Ms Morgane Wirtz has successfully created a machine-actionable metadata using VODAN-in-a-Box and CEDAR platforms. The data collected by the Tunisian team was gathered through 120 interviews from respondents from Agadez (Niger); Tunis, Sousse, Sfax, Zarzis, Kalibia, Djerba, Kerkennah, Medinine (Tunisia) and Libya. More data was also collected by the team through coding 500 relevant media articles. This data was used to create data repositories, catalogs, datasets, and distribution for the FAIR Data Point (FDP) at Tunisia.

**The VODAN-Africa: Tunisia’ Team**

**Pr. Ali Mtiraoui:** Former president of the University of Sousse and the Chair of the Implementation of the VODAN Africa in Tunisia

**Ms Morgane Wirtz:** Freelance researcher and journalist, Coordinator of the implementation of the VODAN-Africa in Tunisia

**Dr. Mariem Ghardallou:** Associate professor in Community and preventive medicine, Coordinator of the implementation of the VODAN-Africa in Tunisia and Data Steward of the project

**Pr. Hassen Boubakri:** Professor of Geography & Migration studies

**Ms Zohra Touati:** Professor of Informatics - Data Scientist of the project
Ms Wiem Ben Hamouda: Master 2 in African Studies at the Faculty of Letter and Human Sciences - Translator & Researcher for the project

Ms Asma Ben Hadj Hassen: Master 2 in Research and Anthropology - Translator & Researcher for the project

University of Sousse’ Contributions

Fair Data Point: FDP
The university of Sousse FDP: https://fdp.uc.rnu.tn/

Special news:


VODAN Africa launches special issue of data intelligence on fair data interoperability on COVID-19

Press release: VODAN Africa inaugurates board

Web series/Webinars:
Role of Data During COVID-19: A VODAN Africa Web Series: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gob6LC_7N1A&t=620s

Trainings sessions (M4M):
M4M Week 12 : Using the CEDAR platform and demonstration of a Local FDP deployment: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KxEmCtuHu1ao&t=4s
M4M Workshop Week 18: VODAN Tunisia University of Sousse Journey to VODAN
In a Box: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NAFJ72RD2o&t=1736s

M4M Week 21 - How to create a CRF template on DSW wizard of VODAN-in-a-box:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VIU_xMhAv0w

Events:
International FAIR Convergence Symposium 2020: Fully virtual event in the week 27 November - 4 December
https://conference.codata.org/conference/FAIRconvergence2020/about/

Additional Links
Memorandum of Understanding - Tilburg University - Université de Sousse
GO-FAIR: https://www.go-fair.org/
VODAN-Africa: https://www.vodan-totafrica.info/t-fr-be
You tube Channel Vodan-Africa: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbYaFxwAENKqEv3L1TUctgA/featured
Linked-In Profile: https://www.linkedin.com/company/vodan-africa/
The Virus Outbreak Data Network is a collaboration between Kampala International University, Leiden University, Tilburg University and other universities, which include Addis Ababa University and Mekelle University in Ethiopia, University of Sousse in Tunisia, Tangaza University in Kenya, Great Zimbabwe University in Zimbabwe and Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Olabisi Onabanjo University and Data Science in Nigeria.

With the support of:

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