

**REHABWEEK**  
**2025**

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**Category:** Development of Technology

**Workshop Title:** Affordable Rehabilitation Robotics and Assistive Technologies for Africa: Challenges and Opportunities

**Organizer(s):** Michelle Jillian Johnson

**Speaker(s):** Stefano Mazzoleni, Rochelle Mendonca, R. Loureiro, Chidiebele Ojukwu, Markus Elisha, Ad Adams, Riaan Stopforth, Maikutlo Kebaetse, María Alejandra Jácquez Graff, Danyella del Rio, Karla Bustamante Valles

**Workshop Time:** 16:00 - 17:30

**Attendee Engagement:** We will have brainstorming sessions and discussion rounds

**Abstract:** Rehabilitation robotics is not inclusive and access to their potential benefits of these technologies is unequal. The shortage of health professionals, rehabilitation therapists, nurses and doctors, and persons capable of taking care of the growing numbers of people with disabilities creates a major gap in healthcare, which is most prevalent in African countries. Evidence suggests that therapeutic and assistive robots and other mechatronic systems can help bridge this care gap to support persons with disabilities. Unfortunately, robot technology-assisted rehabilitation solutions are expensive and as a result they are primarily available in high-income countries. This workshop is designed to explore how clinicians and engineers can address the need to develop more affordable and appropriate rehabilitation and robotics technologies for low- and middle-income countries in Africa. The workshop will consider current practices, discuss barriers to the development of affordable robotics and assistive technologies and provide exemplary efforts. Using neurorehabilitation as a starting context, we assemble a global, multidisciplinary group of doctors, therapists, roboticists and engineers together to present develop recommendations for going forward. This workshop will explore key topics related to the development, implementation, and translation of these technologies into the clinic. Participants will gain insights into the challenges and opportunities to develop and implement affordable robotics in Africa. The participants will be engaged with panels and real time feedback tools (using padlet and other tools) and breakout sessions throughout the workshop to share their experiences, to share their interests, and do networking with their colleagues from all over the world.