What's up

Your Friday Wrap #259 – 13th June 2025
University Mohammed VI Polytechnic

UM6P
Communications and
Public Relations Office

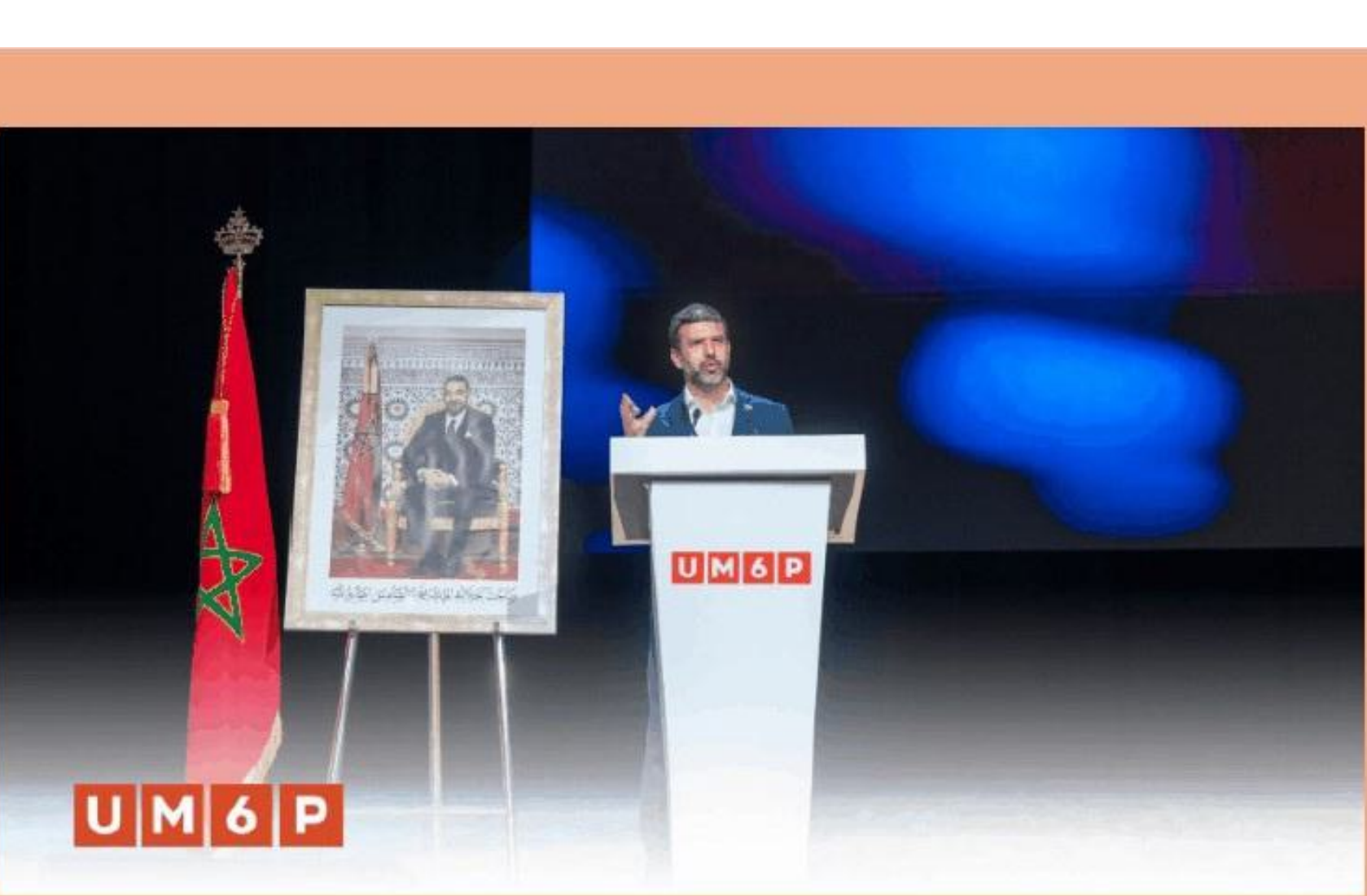
Empowering Minds.

June 17th : World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought

Each year, over 12 million hectares of land degrade. Droughts, growing in intensity, have already cost the global economy over $120 billion in two decades—figures that signal urgent action. Across Africa, these are not distant threats but daily challenges.

At UM6P, we see arid zones as spaces of possibility. Our approach is rooted in fieldwork—testing solutions where problems are most acute. From Morocco to Senegal and Cabo Verde, we develop drought-resistant crops, soil regeneration methods using phosphogypsum, and scalable land management tools.

Our aim is not only to endure drought, but to thrive through it—by regenerating soil, valuing native species, and translating research into livelihood strategies. We combine digital irrigation tools, resilient forage systems, and farmer collaboration to ensure technologies are usable and impactful. Through UM6P_Engaged, we reaffirm our belief: Africa's drylands can be shaped not by scarcity, but by science, collaboration, and vision.



Town hall meeting reflected on progress and future directions at UM6P

On the 19th of June, University Mohammed VI Polytechnic organized a town hall meeting with the President at UM6P Campus in Benguerir.

The meeting brought together faculty, researchers, and staff for an institutional update on UM6P's Vision 2030. President El Habti presented the second report on Vision 2030, reaffirming the university's long-term ambition to position itself as a leading science and innovation institution rooted in Africa and globally connected.

The presentation marked a moment of reflection on the progress made since UM6P's inception in 2017. It highlighted key achievements across academic development, research excellence, and innovation platforms.

The town hall served as a space for dialogue with the university community and reinforced collective engagement with UM6P's long-term mission.

المناظرة الوطنية للاقتصاد الاجتماعي والتضامني
LES ASSISES NATIONALES DE L'ÉCONOMIE SOCIALE ET SOLIDAIRE

UM6P Hosted the 5th National Conference on Social and Solidarity Economy

On the 17th and 18th of June, under the High Patronage of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, University Mohammed VI Polytechnic hosted the 5th National Conference on Social and Solidarity Economy at UM6P Campus in Benguerir. Organized in collaboration with the Secretariat of State for the Social and Solidarity Economy, the event gathered over 1,000 participants, including policymakers, researchers, entrepreneurs, and representatives from Morocco's 61,000 cooperatives, which collectively involve nearly 800,000 members.

The conference was marked by the presence of the Head of Government of Morocco, Aziz Akhannouch, alongside key ministers and senior policymakers. Discussions focused on aligning national strategies with global frameworks such as the United Nations resolution on Social and Solidarity Economy and the African Union's ten-year strategy.

The program featured panel discussions, workshops, and masterclasses on the implementation of Morocco's SSE framework law. Sessions addressed governance models, job creation strategies, digital inclusion, regional development integration, and international best practices to strengthen the sector's contribution to the economy. The event also included partnership signings and an exhibition of SSE initiatives. The forum concluded with over 20 recommendations to embed SSE more deeply into public policy. These included supporting local actors, enhancing institutional coordination, and expanding access to financing and digital tools.

UM6P's role as host reflected its ongoing engagement in inclusive economic development, leveraging its expertise in research, innovation, and policy to support Morocco's transition toward a more equitable and sustainable economy.

UM6P and NBPA Launch the First Edition of One Court Africa in Marrakech

From the 16th to the 19th of June, UM6P organized the inaugural edition of One Court Africa in collaboration with the National Basketball Players Association.

This three-day experience brought together NBA players and leading experts to explore the power of impact investing and discover cutting-edge African initiatives addressing social and environmental challenges. The program featured immersive workshops, case studies, and dynamic exchanges with specialists from across the continent and beyond.

A key highlight was the Jump Shot: NBPA × UM6P Innovation Challenge, hosted at StartGate, UM6P's innovation and entrepreneurship platform. After two days of expert-led masterclasses, personalized mentorship, and strategic workshops, six high-potential African startups—selected from over 420 applications—pitched their ventures during Pitch Day. The selected startups tackled major challenges in financial inclusion, tech-enabled social impact, and sustainable development. A total of $160,000 in funding was awarded by the NBPA

Bridge Africa members also contributed to the success of One Court Africa. Bridgers Taslim Ngome and Abdoulaye Yaro delivered opening keynotes—moderated by Lex Paulson—highlighting the importance of education quality and infrastructure in advancing development in Africa, with compelling examples from Mali and Senegal.

Through this initiative, UM6P reaffirms its commitment to empowering African talent and strengthening connections between the continent and its global diaspora. Program led by UM6P US, with the contribution of Africa Business School, StartGate, and Bridge Africa

Africa's research ecosystem strengthened through the 100PhDs summer school experience

From the 16th to the 20th of June, UM6P hosted the first edition of the 100 PhDs Program Summer School at UM6P Campus in Benguerir

The event was part of the Excellence in Africa initiative, a collaboration between UM6P and EPFL to strengthen scientific research and higher education in Africa. The program brought together doctoral students, researchers, and experts to explore themes including research entrepreneurship, intellectual property, AI applications in research, scientific ethics, and career integration.

UM6P showcased sustainability initiatives at THE global congress

From the 16th to the 19th of June, UM6P participated in the Times Higher Education International Sustainable Development Congress co-hosted with Türkiye's Council of Higher Education in Istanbul.

Staff members and researchers from different departments showcased UM6P's sustainability initiatives through an exhibition booth and engaged with global institutions on potential collaborations. The congress provided a platform for knowledge exchange on sustainability challenges and solutions, aligning with UM6P's commitment to sustainable development.

National and international experts explored Climate-Smart Solutions for 2030 wolrd cup

On the 18th of June, UM6P hosted the "2030 World Cup, World Climate" conference at UM6P Campus in Rabat.

The event focused on Morocco's ambition to co-organize a climate-resilient and environmentally friendly World Cup, emphasizing sustainability in infrastructure, energy, and event planning.

The conference brought together key institutional partners, including the Royal Moroccan Football Federation, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the United Nations Development Programme, and other national and international stakeholders committed to aligning major sporting events with global climate objectives.

Communicating Science #16: Can One device clean the air and fuel the future? A UM6P PhD student thinks so

In the urgent race to combat climate change, the dual challenges of reducing carbon emissions and transitioning to clean energy have often been treated as separate battles. But what if the solutions could be merged into a single, more efficient system? What if the future of energy may not lie only in what we burn, but also in what we remove from the air?

That's the vision driving Houssam Bouaboula, a PhD candidate at UM6P, under the supervision of Professors Youssef Belmabkhout and Abdelghafour Zaabout, whose research combines CO2 capture with green hydrogen production. A synergy that could accelerate the world's path to net-negative emissions.

Check the article

UM6P and ANAPEC joined forces to strengthen national human capital

On the 16th of June, the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Competencies and UM6P signed a partnership agreement at UM6P Campus in Rabat.

The collaboration focuses on creating programs to enhance professional integration and talent development in Morocco. This collaboration also aims to build a sustainable pathway for professional integration and talent development, reflecting on a shared vision to enhance national human capital.

FGSES engaged Fudan University delegates in dialogue on joint academic programs

On the 19th of June, FGSES welcomed a distinguished delegation from Fudan University, led by Qiu Xin, Chancellor and Chairman of the University Council at UM6P Campus in Rabat.

The visit provided an opportunity to discuss ongoing collaboration between FGSES and Fudan's Institute for Global Public Policy, particularly in the areas of student mobility for master's and PhD programs. Discussions also explored joint research initiatives and the development of short-term academic programs, including summer schools.

UM6P advanced cannabis regulation and genomics through new agreements

On the 17th of June, University Mohammed VI Polytechnic and the National Agency for the Regulation of Cannabis Activities signed a framework agreement at UM6P Campus in Benguerir to advance applied research on medicinal cannabis.

The collaboration focused on characterizing the plant's active compounds, exploring their therapeutic potential, and ensuring regulatory compliance. A training component targeting health professionals was also included. A separate agreement with UM6P's African Genome Center launched a genetic characterization project of the local Beldia variety, using next-generation sequencing to support its documentation, traceability, and protection.

Playback Picks #04: Smart Cities Morocco Roadshow

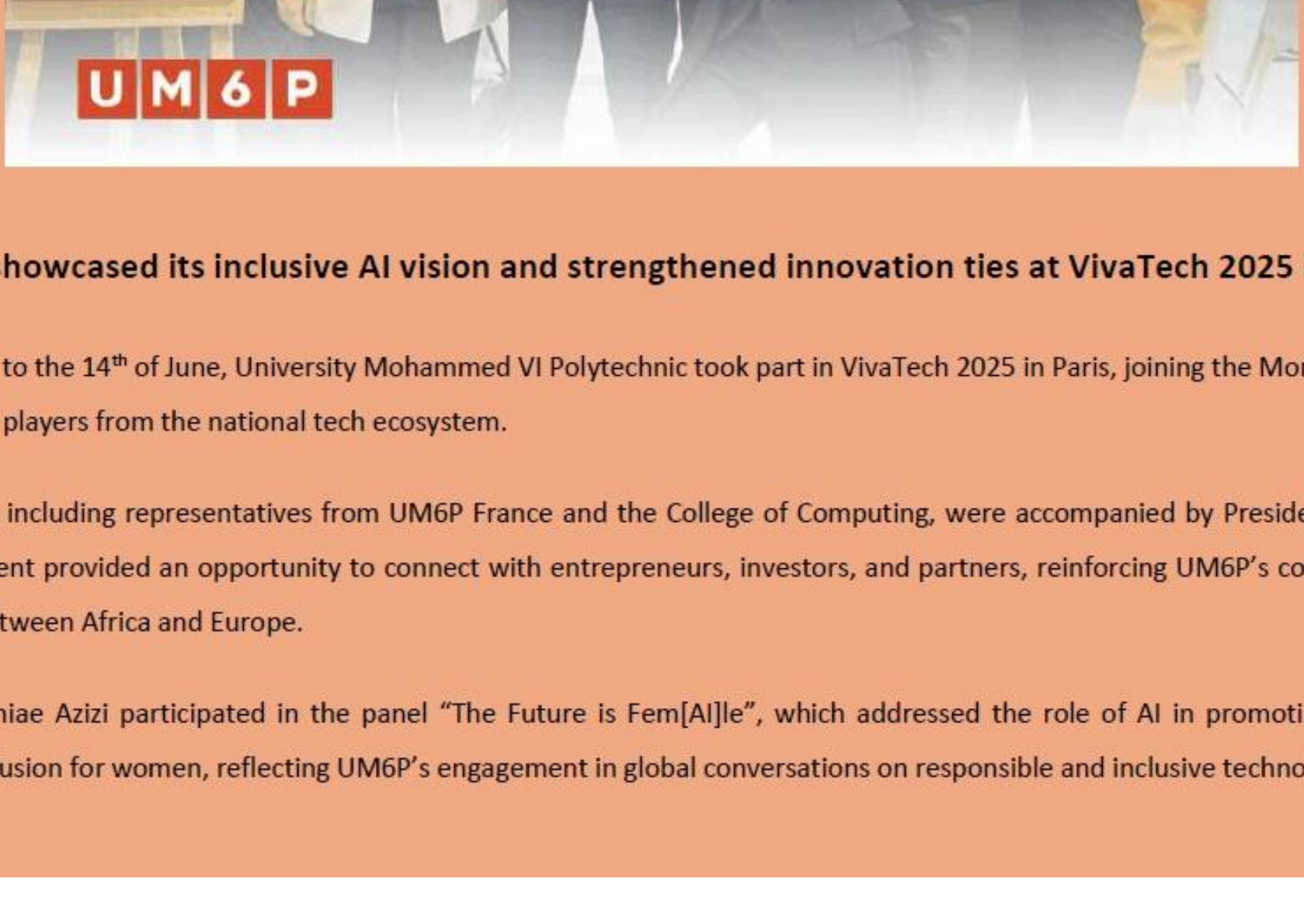
A look back at UM6P's 2025 Deep Tech Summit, the second annual Deep Tech Summit, bringing together innovators, investors, and industry leaders from across Africa and the globe. Centered on accelerating deep-tech breakthroughs from AI and robotics to biotech and blockchain the summit featured 66 sessions across 11 thematic tracks, alongside dynamic formats like reverse pitches, elevator pitches, and workshops designed to spark collaboration.

Watch the Rewind Video

UM6P hosted the second edition of international research and innovation seminar

This week, the second International Research and Innovation Seminar, focusing on artificial intelligence foundations and technological innovation for Africa's economic growth was held at UM6P Campus in Benguerir.

Professor Munther Dahleh presented an analysis of AI's scientific foundations, discussing both its potential societal impacts and limitations. The session addressed considerations around algorithmic biases and human responsibility in automated decision-making processes.



UM6P showcased its inclusive AI vision and strengthened innovation ties at VivaTech 2025 in Paris

From the 11th to the 14th of June, University Mohammed VI Polytechnic took part in VivaTech 2025 in Paris, joining the Morocco Pavilion alongside key players from the national tech ecosystem.

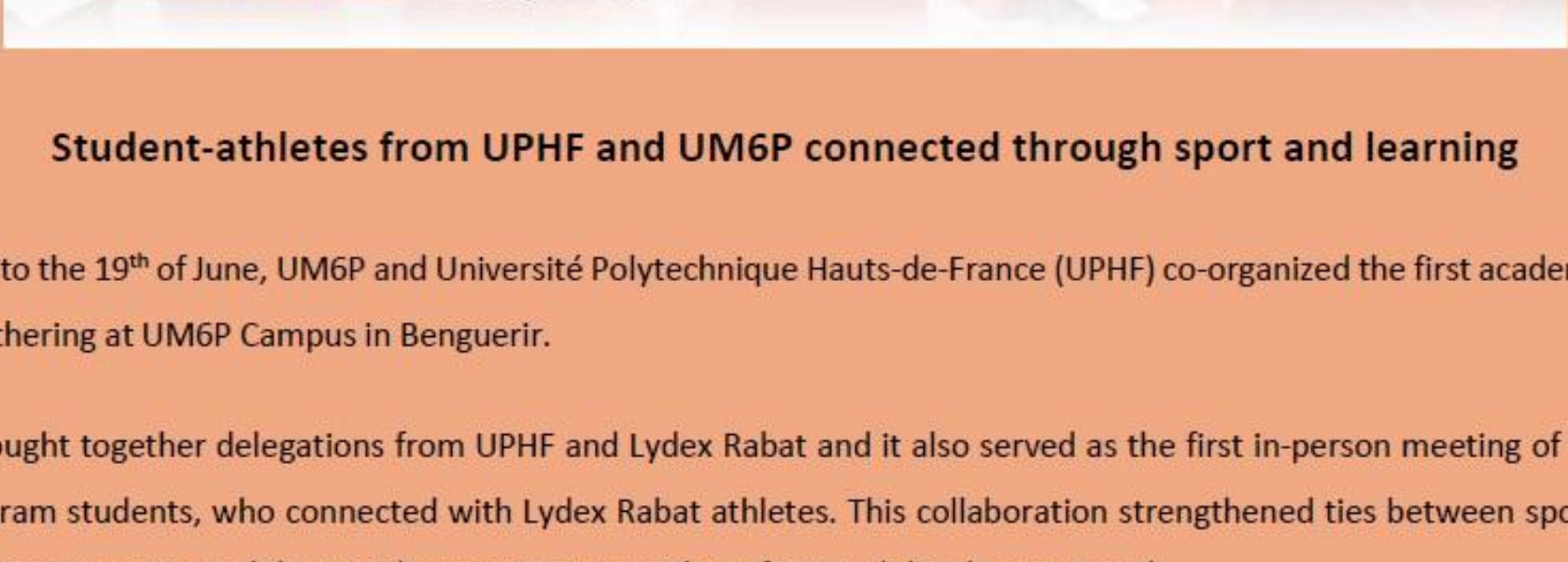
UM6P teams, including representatives from UM6P France and the College of Computing, were accompanied by President Hicham El Habti. The event provided an opportunity to connect with entrepreneurs, investors, and partners, reinforcing UM6P's commitment to innovation between Africa and Europe.

Professor Lamiae Azizi participated in the panel "The Future is Fem[AI]le", which addressed the role of AI in promoting social and economic inclusion for women, reflecting UM6P's engagement in global conversations on responsible and inclusive technology.

UM6P and Kenyan embassy delegation explored pathways for African innovation

On the 18th of June, UM6P welcomed Her Excellency Mrs. Jessica Gakinya, Ambassador of Kenya to Morocco, and Mr. Abdullahi Nurrow, Economic Counselor at the Kenyan Embassy, at UM6P Campus in Benguerir.

The visit focused on shared ambitions for Africa's sustainable development role of education, research, and cross-border collaboration in advancing African-led solutions and explored avenues to strengthen Morocco-Kenya institutional ties. The delegation explored key UM6P innovation hubs, including the MSN Department, 1337 Coding School, and Green Energy Park.



Student-athletes from UPHF and UM6P connected through sport and learning

From the 15th to the 19th of June, UM6P and Université Polytechnique Hauts-de-France (UPHF) co-organized the first academic & sporting excellence gathering at UM6P Campus in Benguerir.

The event brought together delegations from UPHF and Lydex Rabat and it also served as the first in-person meeting of UPHF's online L3P-SHN program students, who connected with Lydex Rabat athletes. This collaboration strengthened ties between sport, education, and community engagement while providing participants with professional development tools

The program combined athletic and academic development through sports medical exams, pitching workshops, and talks on personal branding, online reputation, and technology in sports. The event concluded with a visit to Tizi-n-Oucheg village to observe local community development initiatives.

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AFRICA INITIATIVE

Africa Initiative's Weekly News Digest

Issue 90, June 20, 2025

Africa Initiative's Weekly News Digest on its 90th edition

The UM6P Africa Initiative entity is announcing the release of the 90th edition of the Africa Initiative's Weekly News Digest. The main objective is to share with UM6P community members the latest news, opportunities, and events from across the continent.

We invite you to stay informed and engaged with the evolving developments shaping Africa's growth and future. To consult the 90th edition, please click on the link below :

Africa Initiative's Weekly News Digest – 90th edition

IP3 Program engaged students in Morocco's governance and policy-making processes

On the 17th of June, the Skills Cluster for Agile Learning in Economics and Social Sciences of the Faculty of Governance, Economics, and Social Sciences launched the Public Policy Immersion Program for first-year students.

The program included visits to three public administration institutions : the House of Councilors, Parliament, the Constitutional Court of Morocco, and the Ministry of Economy, Finance, and Administrative Reform. These visits provided students with practical insights into governance processes and public policy implementation in Morocco.

Students from Al Haouz selected for second round of UM6P's vocational training program

This week, ReBuild organized selection and training activities for students from Al Haouz as part of the second SHBM entrance competition for the Initial Vocational Education and Training program.

The initiative, now in its second year, it provides vocational training opportunities for youth from the High Atlas region through structured skills development programs.

WELCOME
UM6P
SOLE
Collective Intelligence Consortium
School of Collective Intelligence

CI Leadership summit equipped Africa's next leaders with leadership and innovation skills

From the 13th to the 15th of June, the CI Leadership Summit Organized by the Collective Intelligence Consortium Student Club in collaboration with Student Organizations, Leadership and Engagement and the School of Collective Intelligence took place at UM6P Rabat in Campus.

The event gathered 70 students under the theme "From Self to Systems: Equipping Africa's Next Leaders." The Participants engaged in workshops, leadership simulations, and design thinking labs focused on systems thinking and personal development. The event included activities like the Africa 2040 Challenge Simulation, leadership roadmap development, and case study analyses with facilitators from Boston Consulting Group (BCG), SCI, and Africa Business School.

Members of African parliament delegation visited UM6P to explore renewable energy initiatives

On the 19th of June, UM6P hosted a delegation of African Parliamentarians, along with representatives from Climate Parliament and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, at UM6P Campus in Benguerir.

The visit focused on renewable energy, including presentations of UM6P's research platforms and projects in the field. Discussions centered on potential collaborations for sustainable energy solutions.

NATURAL HYDROGEN EXPLORATION WORKSHOP
PANEL DISCUSSION
GENESIS OF NATURAL HYDROGEN :
PROCESSES AND IMPLICATIONS
OCP SBU Mining
ONHYM
HYDROJEEL
UM6P
GSMi
GEOLOGY & SUSTAINABLE MINING INSTITUTE

GSMI contributed to dialogue on battery materials and phosphorus at the Mineral-X Program in California

This week, the Geology and Sustainable Mining Institute, participated in the Mineral-X program co-founded by Bidra VC, and KoBold Metals, hosted the Silicon Valley Minerals Forum at Stanford University.

The event brought together researchers, policymakers, mining executives, and investors to explore innovation in the mineral supply chain. The event reinforced ongoing joint projects between Mineral-X and GSMI, including active student exchanges with Stanford.

The GSMI delegation, including Director Professor Mostafa Benzaazoua, Professor Abdellatif Elghali, PhD student Abdelaziz Zine, and UM6P U.S. representative Fatima Zahra El Alami, participated in the event. Professor Elghali contributed to the "P in LFP" panel discussion on the role of phosphorus in battery materials, which generated strong interest in future collaboration with UM6P.

The Globe Digest #71: Acclimation and hydration are keys to beating summer heat

As temperatures and humidity levels rise in the summer months, hydration and heat acclimatization become increasingly vital in maintaining physical and mental health and maximizing performance.

Research from the Exercise Physiology Laboratory, led by Professor Mindy Millard-Stafford, director, and Adjunct Professor Mike Sawka in the School of Biological Sciences, aims to help athletes and occupational workers better understand and prevent sweat loss and dehydration through the development of predictive tools.

Check the article

WOMEN
IN INFRASTRUCTURE
UNIVERSITY MOHAMMED VI POLYTECHNIC
CAMPUS TECHNOPOLIS RABAT-SALE
JUNE 18, 2025
BREAKING BARRIERS FOR WOMEN
IN INFRASTRUCTURE IN MOROCCO
UM6P

Leading women in infrastructure discussed sustainability and leadership priorities

On the 18th of June UM6P hosted a conference on women's role in infrastructure led by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

The event featured key speakers including prominent female leaders from ONCF, Marsa Maroc, Alsa Maroc, and the Ministry of Equipment and Water—highlighting the importance of inclusion and leadership in shaping sustainable infrastructure.

UM6P
SD Sustainable Development
AMBASSADORS
iCORA
International Community for Young Researchers & Innovators in Africa

Sustainable development ambassadors led a research forum at UM6P Laayoune

On the 13th of June , the Sustainable Development Ambassador at ASARI, in collaboration with ICORA, organized a research session at UM6P Campus in Laayoune,

The event convened with 20 participants including PhD students and researchers to examine academic research's role in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals with the 2030 sustainable development agenda. Professor Poliana Mendes de Souza delivered a keynote address on food science applications for SDG implementation, highlighting interdisciplinary approaches. PhD students at ASARI presented their SDG-related research, alongside contributions from international researcher Grace Phiri, who provided cross-regional perspectives.

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Communications and Public Relations Office
LET US HEAR YOU OUT
SPEAK UP
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