UM6P
Communications and Public Relations Office
Empowering Minds.

# What's up

Your Friday Wrap #286 - February 6th, 2026
University Mohammed VI Polytechnic

UM6P
Communications and Public Relations Office

Discover the New UM6P Brand Architecture
Smarter Tools. Stronger collective impact.
Built for the entire UM6P ecosystem

## UM6P and Guinea's National External Scholarships Service Signed an Agreement on Academic Cooperation

On the 4th of February, University Mohammed VI Polytechnic signed a cooperation agreement with the National External Scholarships Service (SNABE) of Guinea to enhance academic mobility.

The collaboration aimed to facilitate access for Guinean students to structured scholarship programs and academic guidance, helping them integrate into higher education.

This agreement reflects a shared interest in developing institutional cooperation in education and scholarships, while helping to broaden access to educational opportunities across Africa.

PhD Thesis Defense
Specialty
Agricultural sciences
Turning salinity into opportunity: enhancing crop productivity of blue panicgrass and quinoa under saline desert conditions in Southern Morocco.
UM6P

## ASARI Inaugurated Doctoral Training With its First PhD Thesis Defense

On the 3rd of February, the African Sustainable Agriculture Research Institute (ASARI) held its first PhD thesis defense, marking an important step in the development of its academic progress.

Ayoub El Mouttaqi defended his doctoral thesis titled "Turning salinity into opportunity: enhancing crop productivity of blue panigrass and quinoa under saline desert conditions in southern Morocco." The research examined agricultural production in arid and saline environments and aligned with ASARI's focus on applied research responding to environmental constraints.

This first defense marked the beginning of doctoral training at ASARI, reinforcing its role in research, knowledge creation, and advanced scientific education related to the agricultural realities of southern Morocco and the broader African region.

## Learning Expedition of Women Leadership in Industry Through the WI-PROGRESS Program

From the 2nd to the 5th of February, as part of the Women in Industrial Progress (WI-PROGRESS) program, the Executive Education in Science, Technology, and Health conducted a learning expedition at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Cambridge.

The international immersion brought together 35 women leaders from OCP and representatives from University Mohammed VI Polytechnic, for a learning experience that combined academic insights with reflections on industrial and organizational contexts.

The program enabled participants to examine leadership practices, expand their perspectives, and improve their capability to support transformation efforts within their teams and organizations.

## Tourath Choir Presented a Musical Performance Combing Tarab Al-Âla and Tarab Ghernati

On the 5th of February, the UM6P Tourath Choir performed " موعد الوترين" a musical piece inspired by Andalusian and Granadian traditions at UM6P Campus in Benguerir.

Conceived as a dialogue between Tarab Al-Āla and Tarab Ghernati, the performance featured choral pieces, solo performances, instrumental arrangements, and classical texts. Through this artistic exchange, the program showcased themes of memory, transmission, and spiritual resonance, highlighting Morocco's rich musical heritage.

The event provided a modern interpretation of classical repertoires, emphasizing the continuity and diversity of Andalusian musical traditions over time and across regions.

**Watch the Full Performance here**

FEBRUARY 2 - 5, 2026
UNIVERSITY MOHAMMED VI POLYTECHNIC BENGUERIR, MOROCCO
UM6P
MSN Material Science, Energy & Nano-engineering
ARC
MAGHREB STEEL

## ICM 2026 Brought Together Academia and Industry Experts for Discussions on Sustainable Metallurgy

From the 2nd to the 5th of February, the Materials Science and Nanoengineering Department (MSN) and the Accelerated Research and Prototyping Center (ARC) Metallurgy, in collaboration with Maghreb Steel and Sonasid, held the International Conference on Metallurgy (ICM) 2026 at the University's Campus in Benguerir.

ICM 2026 aimed to promote cross-disciplinary dialogue and foster collaboration between academia and industry experts to develop practical solutions aligned with sustainability goals in metallurgy.

The conference encouraged dialogue between researchers, professionals, and policymakers on current challenges in the metallurgy sector. Discussions addressed sustainability considerations, innovation in materials and processes, and industry transformation in relation to environmental and economic requirements.

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AVANT PREMIÈRE - RENCONTRE AVEC
JOHN MATHER, PRIX NOBEL DE PHYSIQUE

## "From the Big Bang to Humankind" Symposium Kicked Off with a Pre-event Meeting

To mark the third edition of the International Symposium "From the Big Bang to Humankind: The Evolution of the Universe and Life," the Center for Science and the Quest for Meaning held a pre-event meeting with Dr. John C. Mather, NASA astrophysicist and Nobel Laureate in Physics, at UM6P Campus in Rabat.

The discussion included Dr. Denis Alexander, Molecular Biologist specializing in cellular mechanisms, and Dr. Michael Denton, Biochemist and Geneticist whose research focuses on biological evolution.

With 38 participants, the exchange offered an opportunity to engage scientific perspectives on cosmology, life sciences, and broader reflections on knowledge and meaning in the lead-up to the main symposium taking place at the University's Campus in Benguerir.

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IAS
SOUS NOS PAS
EL ALBANI
4 FÉVRIER 2026 — 10 H — SALLE LAÂYOUNE - RIAD CENTER

## Geoscience Lecture Discussed Human Impact on Earth's Systems

On the 4th of February, the Institute for Advanced Studies hosted Pr. Abderrazak El Albani, Geosciences professor at the University of Poitiers, for a lecture titled "Beneath Our Feet, the Story of a Transformed Planet: The History of the Anthropocene" at UM6P Campus in Benguerir.

The session addressed how human activities have shaped climate, oceans, and biodiversity, presenting the Anthropocene both as a scientific concept and as a framework for reflecting on collective responsibility.

Participants received insights into long-term environmental processes and their implications for contemporary societies.

## A Reading Marathon United Participants at Three NKOON Centers

On the 1st of February, the NKOON centers in El Jadida, Youssoufia, and Khouribga organized a collective reading marathon that brought together young participants for a shared literary experience.

During the event, 150 participants read selected texts, exchanged ideas, and wrote short reflections in a friendly, focused setting. The program wrapped up with local discussions at each center, followed by a joint video exchange among the three cities.

The readings, ranging from works by Leila Abouzeid to García Márquez, supported reflection, imagination, and collective dialogue, highlighting reading as a shared cultural and intellectual activity.

## UM6P Hosted a Delegation from the Institut Supérieur de Management

University Mohammed VI Polytechnic received a delegation from the Institut Supérieur de Management (ISM), led by its President, Mr. Amadou Diaw. The visit followed the Bridge X event held in Dakar and Saint-Louis, during which UM6P representatives engaged with the ISM academic community.

The program provided an opportunity to present UM6P's educational and research ecosystem, including the Digital Learning Center and 1337 Coding School. Meetings with members of the UM6P Management Committee explored potential areas for collaboration, particularly in joint research initiatives and innovative teaching approaches.

The exchanges also addressed broader themes relevant to cooperation within African higher education, including women's empowerment, environmental awareness, climate action, and the influence of lived experience on narratives about Africa. Discussions highlighted opportunities to strengthen academic links and contribute to regional development through shared research and training efforts.

## Diplomacy and Crisis-Management Simulation Engaged Students in Negotiation Exercises

The Model United Nations (MUN) Student Club, in collaboration with Student Organizations, Leadership & Engagement (SOLE),organized ''Inside the Negotiations, a diplomacy and crisis-management simulation'' at UM6P Campus in Benguerir.

The event was inspired by major historical negotiations, including the Yalta Conference, the Berlin Conference, the Madrid Accords, and the Congress of Vienna. The two-day simulation involved participants in scenarios that required diplomacy, negotiation, and strategic decision-making.

Through shifting geopolitical contexts, bargaining process, and simulated media dynamics, attendees explored the complexities of international relations while enhancing skills in negotiation, leadership, strategic thinking, and crisis management.

## OCP's Value Chain Processes Explored through a Training Program

The Executive Education in Science, Technology, and Health delivered a training program for Teal Technology Services collaborators.

Designed to meet TEAL's needs as an OCP partner, the program introduced 100 participants, divided into four groups, to the Group's value chain and operational processes.

Sessions focused on process optimization and the integration of sustainability standards into day-to-day activities. The program concluded with a field visit that provided direct exposure to OCP's facilities and operational practices.

## Free Medical Consultations Offered During a Health Caravan by FMS Students

On the 31st of January, students from the Faculty of Medical Sciences (FMS) in collaboration with Student Organizations, Leadership & Engagement (SOLE), carried out a humanitarian health caravan at the rural hospital in Takate Commune.

This initiative brought together medical professionals, nursing staff, and medical students to provide free medical check-ups, consultations, and preventive health education for residents of Takate and the surrounding areas.

The activity aimed to support access to basic healthcare services while addressing challenges linked to the distance from specialized medical facilities in rural areas.

## Transformation Processes in Africa Discussed during the CAS seminar

On the 5th of February, the Center for African Studies (CAS) organized a session of the World Seen from Africa seminar series titled "Cityness as a Methodological Lens for Understanding Global Change from the Ground Up," at the University's Campus in Benguerir.

The seminar, led by Dr. Sabrine Hakam, postdoctoral researcher at CAS, centered on a case study from Dakar. It discussed how African cities reflect the coexistence of multiple, overlapping global dynamics within a single urban environment.

The exchange provided analytical insights into urban spaces as places for observing global change from the ground up, contributing to discussions on contemporary transformations across Africa.

## UM6P Received a Delegation from the University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne for Academic Discussions

On the 4th of February, UM6P hosted a delegation from the University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, led by Mr. Rémi Bazillier, Vice President for International Relations, discussions were focused on internationalization and academic collaboration.

The meeting provided an opportunity to present UM6P's mission and approach to teaching and research. Exchanges explored avenues for collaboration, including student mobility, joint academic programs, research initiatives, and broader institutional partnerships.

UM6P
1337
MEGHYLOST
BEYOND BORDERS

## MeghyLost Shared Her Experience Cycling Across 33 African Countries with UM6P Students

Student Affairs, in collaboration with 1337 Coding School, held two discussion sessions with Ms. Meryem Belkihel, known as MeghyLost, at UM6P campuses in Benguerir and Rabat on the 3rd and 4th of February.

Drawing from her experience cycling over 34,000 km across 33 African countries, Ms. Belkihel shared insights on resilience, self-discovery, and purpose-driven action. The exchanges addressed themes such as women's empowerment, environmental awareness, and climate action, along with how lived experience influences narratives about Africa.

The sessions combined reflection and dialogue, prompting students to consider ambition, uncertainty, and engagement in both personal and academic contexts.

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Communicating Science

## Communicating Science #43: At UM6P, a Researcher is Rethinking How Renewable Power Stays Stable When the Grid no Longer Cooperates

Today, many of the "obvious" barriers to the energy transition have been reduced. Solar panels are more affordable. Batteries are more capable. Inverters are faster and more efficient.

Yet as renewable generation expands across grids not originally designed for high shares of power-electronics-based sources, a subtler question increasingly dominates engineering discussions: how can grid-connected inverters remain stable when the grid becomes weak or uncertain?

**Check the article**

## Startups Focused on Agroeconomics and Market Mentoring During a Bootcamp

The Agri-Food Tech Incubator held the second bootcamp of its fourth cohort at StarGate.

The first day focused on agroeconomics and the viability of agricultural projects. Sessions addressed value chain analysis, cost structures, pricing mechanisms, and key financial assumptions, combining conceptual frameworks with practical exercises facilitated by Abdelkader Ftouhi, agro-economist and consultant.

The second day centered on market research mentoring through individual consultations led by Dominique Acquaviva and Abdelmalek Latifi. These discussions supported participating startups in refining their market assessments and strengthening the analytical foundations of their projects.

UM6P Africa Initiative
Weekly News Digest
Issue 121 | February 06, 2026
EMPOWER TALENT, EMPOWER AFRICA

## Africa Initiative's Weekly News Digest – 121st edition

UM6P Africa Initiative entity announces the release of the 121st 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 121st edition, please click on the link below:

**Africa Initiative's Weekly News Digest – 121st edition**

## U-FOUNDERS Bootcamp Addressed Legal Structuring and Governance for Startups

The U-FOUNDERS program held the third bootcamp of the sixth cohort at the UM6P Business Center, focusing on legal fundamentals for startups. The session was facilitated by Nawar Mounchit, Managing Director at Cabinet Daim, and Tarek Amar, Legal Advisor in Business Law.

The bootcamp helped participating entrepreneurs to strengthening their understanding of key elements of legal structuring and governance, both essential for building sustainable and well-organized ventures.

This event forms part of U-FOUNDERS' ongoing efforts to support entrepreneurs through targeted capacity-building activities.

Echo Pulse
Echo Pulse

## Mentorship Session Supported Students Preparing for the Hult Prize Startup Competition

On the 4th of February, the Hult Prize UM6P Student Club, in collaboration with Student Organizations, Leadership & Engagement (SOLE), conducted a pitching and mentorship workshop at UM6P Campus in Benguerir.

The session featured two mentors. Ms. Joana Bacelar Virgo presented insights from the international Hult Prize ecosystem, addressing idea development, the value of mentorship, and pathways for scaling projects globally. Mr. Abdelqoudous Fidi shared perspectives from the Hult Prize Morocco experience, offering guidance on team building, common challenges, and structuring early-stage ideas.

Students presented short pitches of their concepts and received direct feedback from the mentors to help refine their projects.

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The Globe Digest

## The Globe Digest #96: New Vaccine Platform Promotes Rare Protective B Cells

A longstanding goal of immunotherapies and vaccine research is to induce antibodies in humans that neutralize deadly viruses such as HIV and influenza. Of particular interest are antibodies that are "broadly neutralizing," meaning they can, in principle, eliminate multiple strains of a virus such as HIV, which mutates rapidly to evade the human immune system.

Researchers at MIT and the Scripps Research Institute have developed a vaccine that generates a significant population of rare precursor B cells capable of evolving to produce broadly neutralizing antibodies. Expanding these cells is the first step toward a successful HIV vaccine.

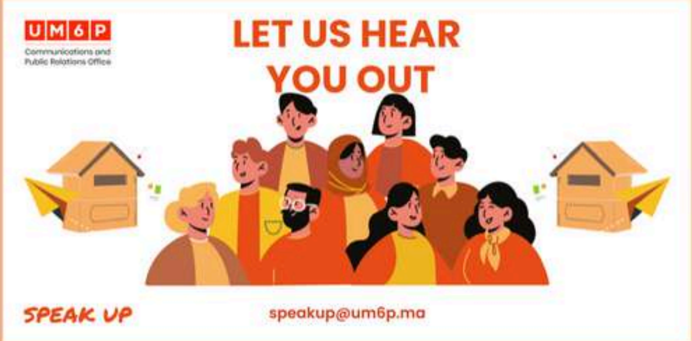
Check the article

## Warm Winter Initiative Supported Community Outreach for Children in Benguerir

On the 5th of February, the Sustainable Development Office organized the Warm Winter Campaign at the Aicha Oum Al Mouminin Orphanage in Benguerir, in collaboration with the General Affairs and Facility Management Division, with support from the Sustainable Development Makers.

The initiative aimed to help children during the winter season while promoting solidarity, social responsibility, and community engagement. UM6P Community members contributed by collecting and distributing winter clothing and essential items, providing practical support to the orphanage.

The involvement of the Sustainable Development Makers emphasized the role of student-led initiatives in translating sustainability values into tangible social actions, in line with broader efforts to improve social well-being alongside environmental concerns.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LET US HEAR YOU OUT
SPEAK UP
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