

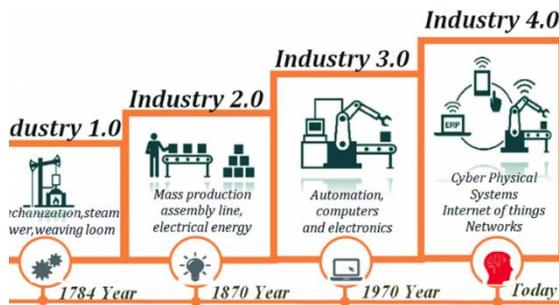
4TH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION PROSPECTS FOR AFRICA – ARSO LAUNCHES ITS 4IR STANDARDISATION STRATEGY- 9TH DECEMBER 2021

The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)—characterized by the fusion of the digital, biological, and physical worlds, as well as the growing utilization of new technologies such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, robotics, 3D printing, the Internet of Things, block chain and advanced wireless technologies, among others, presents significant



opportunities as well as challenges for Africa (Landry Signé, 2020), and the African Continental Free Trade Agreement offers a unique opportunity to enhance governance around the 4IR. This with aligned policies and procedures, the continent can adapt to the rapid changes of the 4IR and leverage it to accelerate participation in global value chains. FROM Poverty reduction, labour transformations, Agriculture, Medicine and many other fields, Policy Makers and Experts believe that the Fourth Industrial Revolution and digitization is transforming Africa into a global powerhouse with many African countries taking the opportunities of 4IR to transform their economies (Njuguna Ndung'u and Landry Signé, 2020). <https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-fourth-industrial-revolution-and-digitization-will-transform-africa-into-a-global-powerhouse/>.

In an event presided by H.E. Albert M. Muchanga, the African Union Commissioner for Economic Development, Trade and Industry and Mining, ARSO and the Standardisation Stakeholders, Virtually, launched the ARSO African Fourth Industrial Revolution Strategy on 9th December 2021. ARSO has an opportunity to provide the required solutions through standards to address this identified challenge to facilitate integration/interoperability of systems.



The African Fourth Industrial Revolution Standardization Strategy (A4IRSS) seeks to provide direction on standardization for the well-being of Africans in the global economy. The strategy also seeks to bridge the gap between the physical and digital world, through collaboration of standardization experts,

technology communities, stakeholders and regulatory agencies in assessing industry standards and policy harmonization that enhances trade within the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) single market.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) provides organizations with opportunities for not only optimizing and enhancing internal operations, but also to innovate and optimize business models. Through the preferred Theory of Change (ToC), the strategy identifies activities that would contribute to improved approaches and coordination of standardization in the 4IR in Africa. The development of the strategy brought together standards organizations, standards development contributors, research organizations, regulatory agencies, technology producers, and software developers represents the shared vision and aspirations of a broad cross-section of and diverse standards stakeholders in Africa. This will help to quicken integration of systems across the business value chains and thus allow easy clearance of goods and collection of taxes by governments supported by appropriate standards. Central to the A4IR Standardization Strategy are the following: **Balanced standardization policies and collaboration between state and non-state actors; Balanced data policies; Capacity building and skills development to enhance productivity; Continuous experimentation for cyber-physical systems; and Integration of measurements, learning and reporting, and information dissemination.**