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Note: Images available at: <https://nyutandon.photoshelter.com/galleries/C0000xCFqU2NY3U/G0000xjy6qJCcrTQ/Rumi-Kenya-NIH>

**Immediate Release**

## **Multi-institution project to train Kenyan experts to bring social determinants to bear on modeling health outcomes**

BROOKLYN, New York, Tuesday, October 26, 2021 – A data-science training program for equipping leaders to support improvement of health outcomes in Kenya, led by a team from NYU, Brown University, and Moi University in Kenya, was chosen as one of 19 initiatives funded by The National Institutes of Health (NIH) under its new [Harnessing Data Science for Health Discovery and Innovation in Africa \(DS-I Africa\)](#) program.

The \$1.7 million award, part of the NIH's [mission](#) to advance data science, catalyze innovation and spur health discoveries across Africa, establishes a consortium consisting of a data science platform and coordinating center, seven research hubs, seven data science research training programs, and four projects focused on studying the ethical, legal and social implications of data science research.

The main principal investigator for the [NYU-Moi Data Science for Social Determinants Training Program \(DSSD\)](#) is [Rumi Chunara](#), associate professor of computer science and engineering and biostatistics at the [NYU Tandon School of Engineering](#) and [NYU School of Global Public Health \(NYU GPH\)](#). The DSSD training program represents a significant opportunity to leverage NYU's strengths in data science, machine learning and artificial intelligence in a collaborative fashion with global partners to improve data science capacity, specifically for health.

The goal of the project is to develop future leaders in data science who are equipped to gather and analyze data to better leverage deep and rich surveys, as well as internet and other digitized data sources that can help the collaborators capture information on the social determinants of health. The project, includes researchers at [NYU Courant](#), NYU GPH, [NYU Wagner](#), the Center for Urban Science and Progress ([CUSP](#)), the [NYU Center for Data Science](#), and the [NYU Grossman School of Medicine](#). It constitutes an extension into a real-world training program of Chunara's [previous work](#) on incorporating social determinants into predictive modeling for individual health outcomes.

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“To develop best practices in treatment and analytics for health outcomes, social determinants must be part of the data mix because they provide context on broader forces impinging on the health both of individuals and for communities. I want to thank the NIH for their acknowledgment of this.” said Chunara. “Besides advancing local efforts in Kenya in data science and health, we also envision our program will augment global knowledge on data science practices.”

DSSD’s design will rapidly expand the local base of expertise via curriculum development, resulting in two Ph.D. (4-year training) and a total of six postdoctoral (2-year) and faculty (12-14 month) trainees, who will study at NYU. Additionally, eight masters and two Ph.D. trainees will commence or complete training (2-year and 4-year training, respectively) through newly developed data science tracks at Moi University.

Connecting with data science industries and organizations with a presence in Kenya, including IBM, Deep Learning Indaba, DataKind, AI.Kenya and Aga Khan University Nairobi and Karachi, will create intellectual meeting spaces for a variety of talented trainees from both data science and health backgrounds, to propel and sustainably advance the field’s capacity in Kenyan institutions as well as the DS-I consortium.

***About the New York University Tandon School of Engineering***

*The NYU Tandon School of Engineering dates to 1854, the founding date for both the New York University School of Civil Engineering and Architecture and the Brooklyn Collegiate and Polytechnic Institute. A January 2014 merger created a comprehensive school of education and research in engineering and applied sciences as part of a global university, with close connections to engineering programs at NYU Abu Dhabi and NYU Shanghai. NYU Tandon is rooted in a vibrant tradition of entrepreneurship, intellectual curiosity, and innovative solutions to humanity’s most pressing global challenges. Research at Tandon focuses on vital intersections between communications/IT, cybersecurity, and data science/AI/robotics systems and tools and critical areas of society that they influence, including emerging media, health, sustainability, and urban living. We believe diversity is integral to excellence, and are creating a vibrant, inclusive, and equitable environment for all of our students, faculty and staff. For more information, visit [engineering.nyu.edu](http://engineering.nyu.edu).*

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