

Prosper Africa's Tech for Trade Alliance Announces a Pharmaceutical Tracing Pilot in South Africa as part of U.S. Digital Transformation with Africa (DTA) Strategy

Prosper Africa, USAID's e-Trade Alliance, IBM, and the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy to Test a Solution to Transform African Pharmaceutical Markets



Prosper Africa's Tech for Trade Alliance (AT4T) is launching its latest pilot in Africa to field test a digital platform intended to bring visibility to Africa's drug supply chains, creating a more transparent, efficient, and safe commercial market for medications.

Prosper Africa, USAID's e-Trade Alliance, [IBM Consulting](#), and the [National Association of Boards of Pharmacy](#) (NABP) are collaborating to launch [Pulse by NABP™](#) in South Africa. Pulse will connect US and global pharmaceutical companies like Pfizer and Roche with African distributors and pharmacies in this emerging market, enabling better communication between trading partners and adding security to this evolving supply chain by enhancing the ability to identify and trace medications.

British Robinson, Prosper Africa's Coordinator, said "Through Prosper Africa's Tech for Trade Alliance, under the Digital Trade for Africa (DTA) initiative, we support partnerships between companies to leverage technology and create products/services that catalyze financial and social returns for Africans and Americans alike. We are excited that IBM will use their Watson AI capabilities in this pilot to help improve the traceability of drugs exported to Africa."

The African pharmaceutical market size was estimated at [\\$26.85 billion in 2023](#) and is expected to expand by 3.4% from 2024 to 2030. There is a significant opportunity for US companies to better understand the market opportunity of Africa, while providing African pharmacies the ability to monetize their data by using AI tools to create more effective sales strategies.

Despite market opportunities, the distribution of pharmaceutical products in Africa presents significant commercial challenges, including fragmented supply chains, poor infrastructure, and differences in regulations across countries. This can result in distribution inefficiencies, resulting in limited product supply and higher prices for patients at the point of sale. By enhancing supply chain visibility, the proposed Pulse pilot has the potential to benefit African distributors and pharmacies by enhancing operations, reducing spoilage, ensuring consistent stock, and creating more profitable partnerships with international suppliers.

"IBM is committed to applying technology and consulting expertise to enhance transparency and foster trust across critical

industries like healthcare. The launch of Pulse by NABP demonstrates the power of digital solutions in transforming the pharmaceutical supply chain.” said Riaz Osman, Managing Partner, Southern Africa & Africa Growth Markets, IBM Consulting. “By leveraging AI and data we aim to create a secure, transparent environment that enables pharmacies and distributors to make more informed, data-driven decisions. This partnership underscores our dedication to help build resilient ecosystems that drive economic growth and societal impact.”

“As an organization whose mission is the protection of public health, we are excited to partner with Prosper Africa and IBM to provide tools that provide greater visibility into African pharmaceutical supply chains and support a more transparent, efficient, and accessible market for medications,” said Lemrey “Al” Carter, PharmD, MS, RPh, Executive Director of NABP. “We look forward to leveraging Pulse by NABP as a pathway for future development of a successful, sustainable, and scalable platform that in the future could provide patients with confidence in the safety and quality of the drugs they buy.”

IBM Consulting’s deep technology and industry expertise, combined with its AI-powered delivery platform, [IBM Consulting Advantage](#) will aid in collecting and analyzing product scan data for Pulse by NABP™ in collaboration with African pharmacies and retailers. Additionally, IBM will provide training on AI tools like [watsonx.ai](#) to better enable these pharmacies and retailers to make data-driven decisions. This public-private collaboration reflects the potential to drive both economic growth and health improvements, benefiting U.S. companies and African consumers alike.

About Prosper Africa

Prosper Africa is a Presidential-level national security initiative aimed at strengthening the strategic and economic partnership between the U.S. and Africa by catalyzing transformative two-way trade and investment flows. Prosper Africa is a whole-of-government initiative that leverages the services and resources of 17 U.S. Government agencies to substantially increase two-way trade and investment between the United States and Africa. The Africa Tech for Trade Alliance is an e-commerce and digital trade alliance supported by the Prosper Africa initiative to strengthen digital access, literacy, and digital enabling environments across the continent.

About NABP

NABP is the independent, international, and impartial 501(c)(3) nonprofit Association that assists its state member boards and jurisdictions in protecting the public health. NABP was established in 1904 to assist the state boards of pharmacy in creating uniform education and licensure standards. Today, it helps support patient and prescription drug safety through examinations that assess pharmacist competency, pharmacist licensure transfer and verification services, and various pharmacy accreditation and inspection programs.

About IBM

IBM is a leading provider of global hybrid cloud and AI, and consulting expertise. We help clients in more than 175 countries capitalize on insights from their data, streamline business processes, reduce costs and gain the competitive edge in their industries. More than 4,000 government and corporate entities in critical infrastructure areas such as financial services, telecommunications and healthcare rely on IBM's hybrid cloud platform and Red Hat OpenShift to affect their digital transformations quickly, efficiently and securely. IBM's breakthrough innovations in AI, quantum computing, industry-specific cloud solutions and consulting deliver open and flexible options to our clients. All of this is backed by IBM's long-standing commitment to trust, transparency, responsibility, inclusivity and service. Visit www.ibm.com for more information.

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