



i3 Selects 7 African Startups Transforming Pharmacy Care to Receive Up to \$225K & Impact Support from the Gates Foundation, MSD & More

- The pan-African Investing in Innovation (i3) program is funded by the Gates Foundation and sponsored by MSD, Cencora (formerly AmerisourceBergen), Endless Foundation, HELP Logistics (a subsidiary of the Kühne Foundation), Sanofi's Global Health Unit and Chemonics to invest in the most promising growth-stage companies building the future of pharmacy care in Africa.
- The 3rd cohort comprises 7 growth-stage startups operating in 19 African countries.
- Selected startups will receive up to \$225K in grants and access to market opportunities to foster growth-focused partnerships with industry leaders, governments, institutional stakeholders and donors.
- The program aims to create local jobs and drive economic growth.

April 30th, 2025 - Lagos, Nigeria - [Investing in Innovation Africa \(i3\)](#), a pan-African initiative to support African healthtech startups to commercialise and scale their offerings, has announced its 3rd cohort of 7 growth-stage companies working to transform pharmacy services on the continent. Sponsored by the Gates Foundation, MSD, Cencora (formerly AmerisourceBergen), Endless Foundation, HELP Logistics (a subsidiary of the Kühne Foundation), Sanofi's Global Health Unit and Chemonics, the three-year program will empower innovators to improve patient access to healthcare across Africa and scale their impact.

In many African countries, pharmacies serve on the frontline of healthcare delivery, providing as much as 70% of initial healthcare visits. For this cohort, i3 has prioritised growth-stage startups with pharmacy-focused innovations, recognising their vital role in expanding sustainable healthcare access and bridging critical delivery gaps while creating jobs to spur economic growth and prosperity.

The selected startups offer powerful, tech-enabled solutions that strengthen pharmacy services across Africa, ranging from inventory management, product protection, last-mile delivery, AI-powered prescription refills, embedded financing, and cloud-based pharmacy systems. These companies are reimagining how medicines and health services reach patients, making essential care more accessible, affordable, and safer.

The selected startups are:

- [Chefaa](#)
- [Dawa Mkonomi](#)
- [Meditect](#)
- [mPharma](#)
- [myDawa](#)
- [RxAll](#)
- [Sproxil](#)

Together, they demonstrate how data-driven innovation reinforces the resilience of Africa's health systems while driving economic growth. Operating in 19 countries across the continent, they show the power of locally grounded, scalable solutions to improve patient outcomes, create jobs, and enable more efficient, data-driven healthcare delivery at scale.

Each innovator will receive up to \$225K in risk-tolerant funding, tailored customer introductions, bespoke deal facilitation, and professional communications and advocacy support. i3 aims to facilitate ~150 strategic partnerships and influence deals valued at ~\$30M between innovators and major healthcare purchasers. In addition, the cohort will participate in i3's flagship Access to Markets event in December 2025, designed to spark high-impact partnerships between innovators and large healthcare companies, governments, donors, and multilateral agencies.

Boniface Njenga, Deputy Director, Health Delivery and Systems, Africa at the Gates Foundation, commented: "As the global health landscape continues to rapidly shift, we remain committed to supporting innovative solutions and initiatives that strengthen local health systems across Africa. The i3 program emphasises the transformative potential of technology-driven innovations on the continent when empowered with the right resources, and we have already seen impressive results from the cohorts."

Dr. Priya Agrawal, Vice President, International Health Equity and Partnerships, at MSD, noted: "Now more than ever, investing in local healthcare businesses is essential for securing effective and sustainable medicine and vaccine distribution across Africa. MSD is committed to partnering with i3 to support entrepreneurs that are dedicated to expanding equitable healthcare access. By engaging the local private sector and meeting patients where they are, we can enhance access and strengthen health systems through fostering innovation in pharmacy services."

Dr. Ashifi Gogo, CEO and Founder at Sproxil, remarked: "It is an honor to be selected as part of the i3 cohort focused on growth-stage companies. The support of leading global life sciences and logistics companies, alongside forward-thinking foundations, is encouraging as we scale our impact. The i3 program continues to differentiate itself through the transformative power of local innovation, and I am eager to see the significant impact this cohort will undoubtedly make."

In the past two years, i3 has provided \$3M in direct grant funding to 60 start-ups across 16 African countries. The program has also established a diverse cohort of innovators, with 43% being women-led and 20% Francophone-led. Finally, successes have recorded 450 facilitated strategic connections, including 122 contracts and pilots, resulting in >\$11M in contracted partnerships, expanded reach, and nearly 1,000 jobs created—half of which were held by women.

i3 is coordinated by [Salient Advisory](#) and [Solina Center for International Development and Research \(SCIDaR\)](#). Startups were selected by an expert committee and with the support of [CcHUB](#) and [Villgro Africa](#) and an independent expert advisory committee.

For more information about the program, please visit <https://innovationsinafrica.com/>

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For additional information, please contact Salient@wimbart.com

About the Gates Foundation

Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the Gates Foundation works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. In developing countries, we work with partners to create impactful solutions so that people can take charge of their futures and achieve their full potential. In the United States, we aim to ensure that everyone—especially those with the fewest resources—has access to the opportunities needed to succeed in school and life. <https://www.gatesfoundation.org/>

About MSD

At MSD, known as Merck & Co., Inc., Rahway, NJ, USA in the United States and Canada, we are unified around our purpose: We use the power of leading-edge science to save and improve lives around the world. For more than 130 years, we have brought hope to humanity through the development of important medicines and vaccines. We aspire to be the premier research-intensive biopharmaceutical company in the world – and today, we are at the forefront of research to deliver innovative health solutions that advance the prevention and treatment of diseases in people and animals. We foster a diverse and inclusive global workforce and operate responsibly every day to enable a safe, sustainable and healthy future for all people and communities. For more information, visit www.msd.com and connect with us on [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).

About Cencora

Formerly known as AmerisourceBergen, Cencora is a leading global pharmaceutical solutions organization centered on improving the lives of people and animals around the world. Cencora partners with pharmaceutical innovators across the value chain to facilitate and optimize market access to therapies. Care providers depend on Cencora for the secure, reliable delivery of pharmaceuticals, healthcare products, and solutions. Cencora's 46,000+ worldwide team members contribute to positive health outcomes through the power of Cencora's purpose: Cencora is united in its responsibility to create healthier futures. Cencora is ranked #10 on the Fortune 500 and #18 on the Global Fortune 500 with more than \$290 billion in annual revenue. Learn more at <http://cencora.com>.

About Endless Health

Focused on empowering communities through holistic and integrated primary care, Endless Health makes catalytic investments in innovative tools and interventions that enhance healthcare access and outcomes, such as enabling patients and frontline providers with AI, engaging pharmacies in primary care, and aligning provider incentives with patient-centered measures of experience and outcomes. Their mission is to bridge healthcare gaps worldwide by leveraging technology to create sustainable, inclusive health systems. Learn more at <https://www.endlessnetwork.com/initiative-health.html>

About HELP Logistics

As a unique non-profit subsidiary of the Kühne Foundation, HELP Logistics AG has been advancing logistics excellence in the humanitarian and development sectors since 2014. Headquartered in Switzerland, we operate across the Middle East, Africa, Asia-Pacific and Europe. Our mission is to act as a global catalyst for advancing supply chain and logistics expertise to enhance the lives, opportunities, and resilience of people, communities, and economies worldwide. For more information, visit: <https://www.help-logistics.org>

About Sanofi's Global Health Unit

Sanofi's Global Health Unit is a pioneering, not-for-profit social business model with a mission to improve the lives of underserved populations in 40 countries with the highest unmet medical needs. We achieve this through innovative, inclusive healthcare models and partnerships, delivering a sustainable impact. Established in 2022, the Impact Investment Fund is focused on supporting the scale-up of businesses to improve access to healthcare by supporting startup companies and other innovators who can deliver scalable solutions for healthcare in underserved regions. For more information, visit: <https://www.impact.sanofi/>

About Chemonics International

Founded in 1975, Chemonics is a leading global sustainable development firm for one reason: our people. We are 6,000+ professionals in more than 100 countries around the globe, and 90 percent of us are working in a community we've long called home. Our teams reflect a diversity of technical expertise and local knowledge because solving complex development challenges requires both. And as a company, we are committed to connections – global and local, human and technological – that allow learnings to efficiently flow and adapt between experts, projects, and countries. Where Chemonics works, development works. Learn more at <https://chemonics.com/>.

About Salient Advisory

Launched in 2020 with a globally distributed team in Kenya, Nigeria and Canada, Salient Advisory helps changemakers enact transformative approaches to health. The company analyses and supports partnerships to use technology and innovations, adapt policy and financing, and elevate unheard voices to change global conversations and transform access to care. Learn more at <https://www.salientadvisory.com/>.

About SCIDaR

SCIDaR is an indigenous, Nigeria-based health systems consulting and implementation non-profit organisation that works with governments, development organisations, and the private sector to optimise population health outcomes. It applies proven business and market-shaping techniques and utilises its relationships and understanding of Africa's public and private sector health system actors to ensure sustainable impact. Learn more at <https://scidar.org/>.

About Chefaa

Chefaa is an AI-powered GPS enabled platform which enables patients to order, schedule and refill their prescriptions across Egypt. Orders can be fulfilled in 90 minutes through partner pharmacies or pre-scheduled at discounted prices. Differentiates itself through medication guides, medication reminders and telepharmacy services. Chefaa also provides data and insights for pharma companies, insurance and BNPL offerings to retail pharmacies. Learn more at www.chefaa.health.

About Dawa Mkononi

Dawa Mkononi is a B2B pharmaceutical supply chain platform leveraging technology and embedded financing to streamline medicine distribution for drug shops, pharmacies, clinics, and hospitals. Differentiates itself through AI-driven demand forecasting, real-time inventory tracking, and a buy-now-pay-later model powered by an in-house credit scoring system, ensuring fast, affordable, and compliant medicine procurement. Learn more at www.dawamkononi.co.tz.

About mPharma

mPharma enables access to health products through a vast chain of retail pharmacies operating across 8 countries. For providers, mPharma provides inventory management services, ensuring availability of quality medicines. For patients, mPharma provides a range of primary care services, leveraging nurses, physicians, and pharmacists. Learn more at www.mpharma.com.

About myDawa

MYDAWA is a hybrid digital and physical healthcare platform operating a bricks-and-clicks model to provide medications, teleconsultations, diagnostics, and insurance-integrated healthcare. Differentiates itself through vertically integrated generics manufacturing, which drives lower costs (up to 30%) and ensures quality, making healthcare more affordable and accessible. Learn more at www.mydawa.com.

About Meditect

Meditect is a B2B SaaS platform digitizing pharmacy management and data-driven healthcare analytics across Francophone Africa. Differentiates itself through cloud-based pharmacy management software, AI-powered credit scoring for instant financing, and data monetization for pharmaceutical companies and public health organizations. Learn more at www.meditect.com.

About Sproxil

Sproxil started as a mobile-based drug authentication platform tackling counterfeit medicines but has evolved into a comprehensive healthtech solution. In addition to its product protection and visibility offerings, it now provides real-time pharmaceutical market data (Sproxil Surveys), an AI-powered patient engagement platform (AISHA), and tech-driven accountability systems to improve supply chain transparency, medication safety, and public health decision-making. Learn more at www.sproxil.com.

About RxAll

RxAll is a tech-enabled pharmaceutical platform leveraging AI, data analytics, and fintech to enhance medicine authenticity, accessibility, and affordability across Africa. In addition to its AI-powered drug authentication service (RxScanner), it differentiates itself by offering a digital pharmaceutical marketplace, embedded financing for pharmacies (RxPay Credit), and partnering with enterprise and government partnerships to monetize market insights. Learn more at www.rxall.net.