Press release
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Orange releases African-language AI models to advance digital inclusion in Africa

- Orange publishes five fine-tuned, open-weight large language models incorporating Wolof language on Hugging Face, available free for non-commercial use.
- Orange joins coalition of more than 60 organizations focused on increasing for linguistic diversity in AI models, further underlining its commitment to responsible AI, local innovation and greater digital inclusion across Africa.

Orange has released five fine-tuned, open-weight large language models (LLMs) for Wolof, a language spoken by millions of people across West Africa as part of its pioneering work to progressively incorporate African languages that are not currently understood by AI models. Available free for non-commercial use, the resources pave the way to digital services that better understand and respond to local languages. The initiative embodies Orange's Trust the future strategy, which aims to build digital services that are more inclusive, accessible and trustworthy.

Commitment to making AI more accessible across Africa

Despite Africa's linguistic diversity, many languages remain significantly underrepresented in AI technologies today. By making open-weight Wolof models widely available as open-source, Orange is giving local developers, researchers and public authorities the tools to build and test digital services that understand and generate written Wolof. Potential applications include conversational assistants, frequently asked questions (FAQ) tools and guided digital journeys as part of public digital service programs.

As a further indication of Orange's commitment to driving digital inclusion in the region, it will also join the new global coalition of more than 60 organizations focused on increasing linguistic diversity in AI models, contributing its deep AI and digital expertise and local knowledge across 18 Middle East and African markets, to drive access to AI technologies that understand the rich diversity of African languages and dialects that exist across the region.

Combining AI expertise with responsible innovation

Developed and fine-tuned by Orange's in-house AI teams, it has created a range of five different sized models that provide developers with the flexibility to adapt them to specific usages. Orange's commitment to delivering responsible and frugal AI is underlined by its decision to build open-weight models and make them available as open source, for free, ensuring that they are affordable and that the environmental impact is minimized.

"At Orange, we believe AI development must go hand in hand with a commitment to making it accessible to as many people as possible, while respecting local needs and ensuring it is developed and deployed responsibly. By drawing on our deep in-house expertise to fine-tune AI models, we can help harness their potential for the benefit of society." said Usman Javaid, Chief AI Officer, Orange.

“The future of digital in Africa must undoubtedly be built around the languages people speak every day, easing communication and improving access to vital services. The publication of these models is more than a technical milestone; it delivers on a promise to make a real difference to people’s lives. Orange remains committed to reaffirm its ambition to harnessing the potential of AI across its 18 markets and accelerate Africa’s digital transformation,” said Ben Cheick Haidara, Deputy CEO and Director of Operations, Orange Middle East Africa.

Building on Orange’s work in African languages

The Wolof initiative is part of Orange's wider work on African languages, including Lingala, Swahili, Darija, Mooré and Dioula. Working closely with its local teams, Orange continues to explore how to better reflect the linguistic and cultural diversity of the markets where it operates. Beyond the technology, the goal is for AI to drive inclusion, accessibility and value for people, businesses and local ecosystems.

About the models

Fine-tuned by Orange’s AI teams, the models support written-text understanding and generation in Wolof. The accompanying training dataset is based on public datasets automatically translated into Wolof and contains no Orange corporate data. The models and training data are available for non-commercial use on Hugging Face. Commercial use may be possible under a separate agreement with Orange.

Access the Wolof language model collection on Hugging Face:
https://huggingface.co/collections/Orange/wolof-lm

About Orange
Orange is one of the world’s leading telecommunications operators. The Group aims to be a trusted partner for everyday digital life, providing individuals, businesses and communities with reliable connectivity and innovative services. At the end of 2025, Orange connected 340 million customers (including MasOrange) in 26 countries and generated revenue of €40.4 billion.
As a trusted operator, Orange relies on the excellence of its very high-speed networks to roll out digital infrastructure across Europe, Africa and the Middle East. The Group is Europe’s fibre leader, with 100 million premises connectable and convergent offers. In France, Orange connects 34 million customers and was ranked No. 1 by regulator Arcep for the quality of its mobile network for the 15th consecutive year. In Africa and the Middle East, the Group’s growth engine, Orange serves nearly 180 million customers and promotes digital and financial inclusion through connected services.
Under the Orange Business brand, the Group supports businesses in transforming their networks and in adopting AI, trusted cloud and cybersecurity solutions. Orange is also a major player in the wholesale market, with a leading global infrastructure and substantial capabilities in deploying and operating submarine cables. A committed innovator, Orange draws on 700 researchers and holds a portfolio of 11,000 patents.
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