

AethexAI raises \$3M to build voice infrastructure for overlooked markets

Enterprise voice AI startup AethexAI secures \$3M to expand across key markets after reaching production scale with enterprise customers.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, UNITED STATES, June 4, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [AethexAI](#), a voice AI infrastructure company building for enterprises across emerging markets, today announced a \$3 million pre-seed round led by 4DX Ventures and the launch of its platform. The round included participation from Enza Capital, Dorm Room Fund, Mojo Ventures, 26 Fund and strategic angel investors, including

Stanford faculty, telecoms executives and AI researchers from Anthropic. The funding will be used to scale enterprise deployments, expand engineering and go-to-market teams, and deepen product coverage across key regional markets.

Voice remains a primary channel for enterprise customer interaction across emerging markets, and while many companies have already experimented with voice AI, most solutions have failed to perform reliably in production. Existing tools struggle with unreliable connectivity, fragmented telephony, high pricing and poor handling of local speech, often making them more expensive than human agents.

AethexAI addresses this gap by rebuilding the voice stack from the ground up for these environments, enabling reliable, cost-effective deployment. This is done through a single platform: self-hosted, market-localised models trained on proprietary data, wired directly into fully managed telephony, orchestration, and existing workflows. Delivered through a no-code interface and APIs, it enables businesses to deploy and scale voice agents within existing workflows at a fraction of the cost of existing providers.

The company is initially targeting a market of 1.5 billion people across Africa and the Middle East,



AethexAI founders Mariama Diallo (left) and Ayooluwa Odemuyiwa (right)

where global providers have yet to deliver at scale and plans to expand to other emerging markets at a later date.

Voice infrastructure for emerging markets

Founded by [Mariama Diallo](#) and [Ayooluwa Odemuyiwa](#), AethexAI was built to make voice agents deployable at scale in emerging markets. Diallo previously worked in investment banking at Goldman Sachs before joining YC-backed Model ML as its first product and growth hire, working closely with large enterprise clients. Odemuyiwa trained as a computer scientist at Caltech, building systems across aerospace and at Meta, before attending Stanford Graduate School of Business.

The pair started building AethexAI last year after spending time on the ground with businesses across Africa and the Middle East, where they saw firsthand that existing voice AI models were not built for these environments. As a result, companies were unable to automate large parts of their customer interactions, leaving significant efficiency gains and revenue opportunities untapped. They left their respective roles to build AethexAI full-time and develop a purpose-built voice infrastructure stack from the ground up.

Platform and developer ecosystem

The platform is powered by Kora 1, AethexAI's proprietary voice model stack, trained on licensed datasets from call centres, radio and content platforms and designed for noisy environments, multiple accents and languages. Pricing starts from \$0.030 per minute, significantly lower than other providers, which can exceed \$0.10 per minute before additional costs. The company is also launching a developer platform, enabling third parties to build voice applications across the region using a single API.

Mariama Diallo, co-founder of AethexAI, said: "Voice is already how businesses operate across emerging markets, but the technology behind it hasn't kept up. We kept hearing the same thing from customers: that existing tools simply didn't work in their environments. That's why we built our own model stack and infrastructure from the ground up, designed for how these markets actually operate. With this backing, we're now scaling AethexAI into the leading voice infrastructure platform in these markets.

Ayooluwa Odemuyiwa, co-founder of AethexAI, said: "Voice AI failed in these markets at every layer of the stack. Latency, cost, poor handling of code switching, and weak performance under packet loss, jitter, and low-bitrate audio in real telecom networks led these systems to break in production. The fix was not incremental. It required redesigning the entire stack. Kora 1 is our family of speech models, specialised by dialect and fully self-hosted. We built and own the data pipeline behind them. Telephony, interruption handling, and retrieval are native to the system, proven and refined through enterprise deployments, not bolted on."

Walter Badoo, Co-Founder & Managing Partner, 4DX Ventures, said: "Voice AI adoption in emerging markets has been constrained, less so due to demand, but rather by infrastructure that was never designed for these environments. AethexAI has taken a fundamentally different approach, rebuilding the stack from the ground up for how these markets actually operate. With real production deployments already at scale, the AethexAI team is building what we believe will become the defining voice infrastructure layer for the next billion users."

AethexAI currently has a team of 10 and expects to double its headcount by the end of 2026.

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About AethexAI

AethexAI is a voice AI infrastructure company building for enterprises across Africa and the Middle East. Its platform combines speech models, telephony integration and agent orchestration through a no-code enterprise platform and developer APIs and SDKs. AethexAI is building voice infrastructure designed for real-world enterprise deployment across the world's fastest-growing markets. <https://aethexai.com/>

About 4DX Ventures

4DX Ventures is a pan-African venture capital firm investing in early-stage technology companies across Africa and global markets. Founded in 2017, the firm partners with ambitious entrepreneurs building category-defining businesses, providing not only capital but also strategic, operational and technical support to help them scale. <https://www.4dxventures.com/>

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