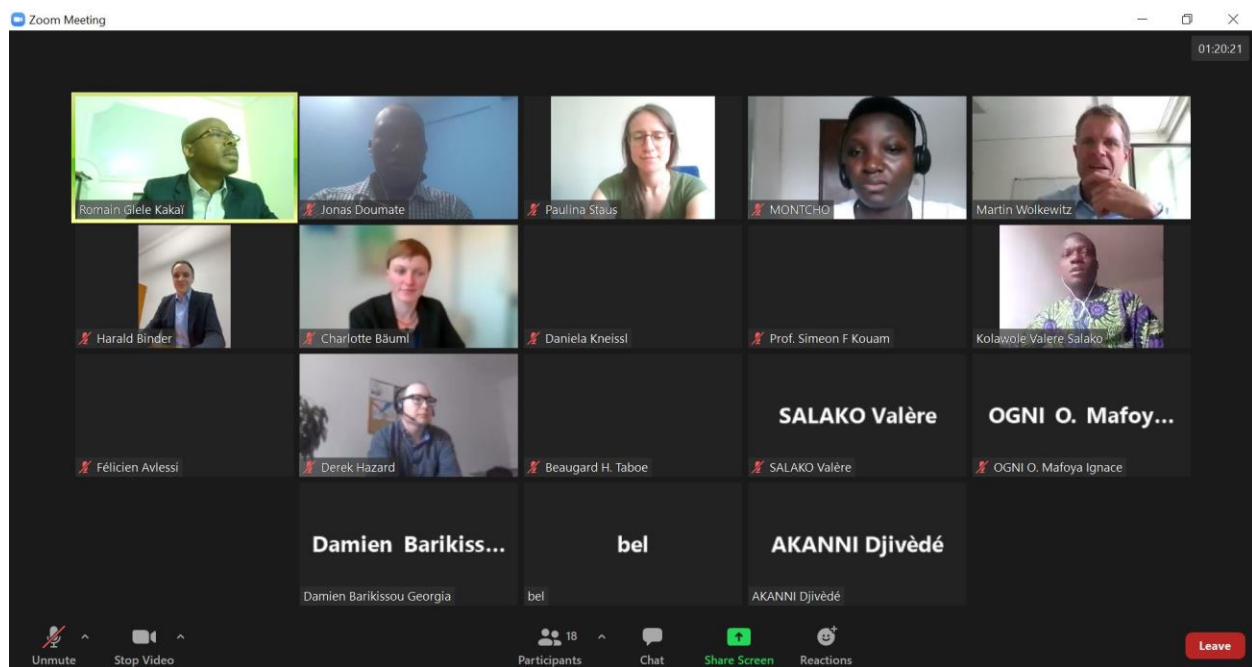


## Kick off meeting

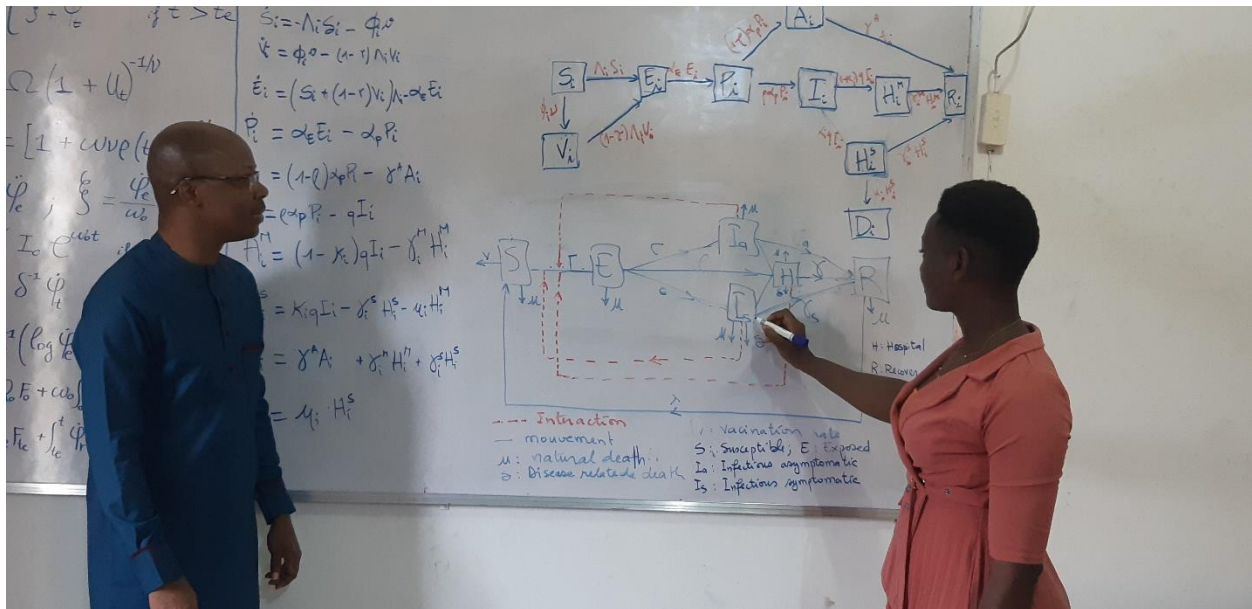
On July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021, a kick off meeting was organized online to launch the HRH-SEMCA. The meeting started with the welcome note of Dr Valere Salako, a junior researcher of the project. The representative of Alexander von Humboldt-Foundation (AvH), Dr Charlotte Bäuml next presented the context of this new initiative called alumni sponsorship programme “Humboldt Research Hubs in Africa” aiming to support research teams in Africa through funding from the Federal Foreign Office (Germany). Next, Professor Romain Glèlè Kakai, the coordinator of the hub, welcomed and thanked all participants. Prof. Harald Binder, the Head of the Department, Institute of Medical Biometrics and Statistics (University of Freiburg), and Prof. Martin Wolkewitz, German Partner of the HRH-SEMCA, emphasized the importance of collaboration between research institutions to share knowledge and experiences to effectively fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. After their intervention, the hub has been officially launched by Prof Felicien Avlessi, Vice Chancellor of the University of Abomey-Calavi. After the official launch, Prof Glèlè Kakai made a short presentation of the HRH-SEMCA, emphasizing the objectives and the different work packages of the project. The online meeting ended by discussions among the participants.



**Photo:** Picture showing the participants of the online kick off meeting

## Face to face meetings

From July 27th to August 04th, 2021, a face-to-face meeting was organized at Sun City Hotel, Abomey (Benin). The aim was to operationalize each work package by providing a comprehensive methodological approach to be used as well as research topics for master and PhD students. The project team members were organized in 4 working groups. The first working group composed by Mr Idelphonse Sode and Dr Valère Salako has developed the first work package entitled Analyzing current spatial patterns of COVID-19 in Africa in relation to socioecological characteristics of countries. The second work package has been developed by Dr Bruno Lokonon and Dr Jonas Doumate and aim to model the effect of an imperfect vaccine on COVID-19 dynamics in Africa. The third work package entitled Analyzing potential seasonality in COVID-19 dynamics in Africa has been operationalized by Mr Beaugard Taboe and Prof Romain Glèlè Kakaï. The fourth work package covered the analyse of COVID-19 dynamics in the face of non-pharmaceutical interventions in Africa and has been developed by Mr Frédéric Tovissode and Ms Yvette Montcho. The face-to-face meeting has closed with the presentation of the results of each working group.



**Photo:** Picture showing Ms Montcho (PhD student) and Prof Glèlè Kakaï discussing a mathematical model to be used in the project (WP3).