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REPUBLIC OF KENYA

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE DIGITAL ECONOMY (MICDE)

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Kenya's perspective on AI, digital transformation and its role in driving development.

Eng. John Tanui, CBS

Principal Secretary, The State Department for ICT and Digital Economy

Kenya

Kenya ICT adoption across key areas

Mobile Adoption

~76 Mn

Mobile phone devices in use across Kenya

>54% owns phone

Smartphone devices (~42 Mn) and 44% featurephones (~33 Mn)

Mobile money subscriptions in Kenya hit 45.4 million

Internet Adoption

~35% of Kenyans

Youth aged 18-34 leading the digital adoption race, with over 80 per cent owning a mobile phone and 58.6 using the Internet

8

Subsea cables connecting Kenya to international landing points[2];

Cloud Adoption

<20 MW

Existing data centre capacity with announced projects up to **150 MW by 2028**

10+

Commercial data centre facilities across the country; 4 Tier III certified

Government Adoption

Over 22K

Core public services digitised across health, tax, agri, national archives, civil registration, transport

Over 14.5 Million

e-citizen account holders spanning over 22k+ services

Kenya's ICT sector is among **Africa's most advanced**, driven by strong digital infrastructure, high cloud adoption, and the "Silicon Savannah" start-up ecosystem, which secured ~$640M in VC funding in 2024 (#1 in Africa)

"Kenya is positioning itself as a Launchpad for Africa's Digital Transformation"
Mastercard "Harnessing the transformative power of AI in Africa" report (Aug 2025)

"Kenya ranked top in ICT regulation in Africa"
CAK based on UN International Telecommunication Union ICT Regulation Tracker (June 2025)

"Kenya tops African Venture Funding in 2024"
Africa: The Big Deal Round–up Report, 2024

"Kenya leads the world with 4 hours 19 minutes daily on social media, way above the global average of 2 hours 23 minutes.

"Kenyans top global rankings for ChatGPT use in 2025 with 42.1% of internet users aged 16+ using the platform

1. Includes fibre-optic, DSL/copper, cable modem, fixed wireless (e.g., LTE routers, WiMAX), and satellite
2. Includes active and planned

Source: CAK Quarterly Reports; Press Search

Kenya's AI sector is growing, with promising buy-in from government, private sector, and investors

Adoption

Telecoms and banking are leading the way with high AI uptake in telecoms and **50%** of banking institutions already implementing AI solutions

Consumers are also rapidly adopting AI with **42%** of Kenyan internet users use ChatGPT, ranking Kenya #1 globally in multiple monthly rankings[1]

Investment

>80% of all of Kenya's VC funding into startups comes from international investors - signalling strong international confidence in the ecosystem

Increased AI-ready data centre investments **aimed at boosting** the country's compute capacity –
160 MW+ announced in the past year

Readiness

Kenya ranks **8th** in Africa n the Government AI Readiness Index[2] (by Oxford Insights) and **4th** in Africa[3] in Qubit Hubs' AI Talent Readiness Index[4] (by Qhala) - reflecting steady progress in digital governance and technical skill development

1. Kenya topped the ranking in January, April, June Statshots | 2. The Government AI Readiness Index evaluates the AI-readiness capacity of 188 countries globally by the end of 2024 assesses the readiness of 188 countries to adopt AI in public services in 2024, using 40 equally weighted indicators across three pillars: Government - covering national AI strategy, governance and ethics, digital capacity and adaptability, Technology Sector - assessing sector maturity, innovation capacity and human capital and Data & Infrastructure - examining infrastructure, data availability and data representativeness | 3. Countries ahead of Kenya include South Africa, Tunisia and Egypt | 4. The AI Talent Readiness Index evaluates the AI-talent ecosystem of 54 Africa countries by the end of 2024 across three core dimensions: digital skills – covering the availability and quality of AI-related education and workforce capabilities (40%), data & infrastructure - assessing internet access, computational capacity, and data availability (35%) and government readiness - examining policies, strategy and institutional support for AI adoption (25%)

Source: Oxford Intelligence AI Talent Readiness Index and Qubit's AI Talent Readiness Index 2025; ICT Authority Report of the information, communications and the digital economy sectoral working group; Kenya Innovation Outlook 2024; CBK 2024 Banking Sector Innovation Survey; DataReportal & Meltwater, Digital 2025 July Global Statshot

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The government has proactively developed ICT policies and strategies to drive growth

Detailed ahead

June 2008	Kenya Vision 2030	**National development blueprint designating ICT as a pivotal pillar** to drive economic growth, innovation, and international competitiveness
August 2020	National ICT Policy	Refined policy focusing on **expanding broadband access,** enhancing digital inclusion, strengthening cybersecurity, and **promoting ICT-driven transformation**
April 2022	Kenya National Digital Master Plan	Strategy intended to **expedite nationwide digital transformation,** infrastructure deployment, e-government enhancements, and digital public service delivery
2023[1]	National Skills Development Policy	**Framework emphasising ICT skills enhancement** aligned to market demands and emerging technological trends to **foster an inclusive digital economy**
March 2024	BETA Pillar: Digital Superhighway and Creative Economy	**Four core initiatives:** Achieve universal broadband availability across Kenya within five years; enhance government service delivery through digitalisation and automation; establish Africa Regional Hub and promote development of software for export; build a creative economy
Sept. 2024	MICDE[2] Strategic Plan 2023-2027	**A blueprint for a digital, knowledge economy** built on five pillars[3], aligned with BETA and Vision 2030, leveraging emerging tech to **expand access, secure assets, and grow a competitive ICT market**
Dec. 2024	Kenya Cloud Policy	**Regulatory guidance on cloud adoption in public and private sectors,** underscoring data security, sovereignty, and operational efficiency
March 2025	Kenya National AI Strategy 2025-2030	**A roadmap to position Kenya as an AI leader** by strengthening AI infrastructure, data governance, research, talent, and ethical use to drive growth and inclusion

1. Month of publication not publicly specified; available online to public as of April 2024 | 2. Ministry of Information, Communications, and Digital Economy | 3. Pillars are Agriculture, MSMEs, Housing, Healthcare, and the Digital Superhighway

Source: Genesis Analytics, Government of Kenya

KENYA NATIONAL AI STRATEGY & POLICY DEVELOPMENT

ROADMAP & STATUS (2025-2030)

1. NATIONAL AI STRATEGY (2025-2030)

OFFICIAL LAUNCH: MARCH 2025

PURPOSE: HARNESS AI FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, ECONOMIC ACCELERATION, & SOCIAL INCLUSION

A THREE CORE PILLARS

AI DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Modernizing Cloud
Expanding Broadband
Bridging Digital Divide

DATA ECOSYSTEMS

Standardizing Data
Ensuring Data Sovereignty
Evidence-Based Policymaking

AI RESEARCH & INNOVATION

Developing Local AI Models
Technical Growth
Regional Data Centers

B FOUR CROSS-CUTTING ENABLERS

ADAPTIVE GOVERNANCE

Flexible Rules
Response to Change

TALENT DEVELOPMENT

AI Literacy in Curricula
Upskilling Workforce

PUBLIC-PRIVATE INVESTMENT

Funding for Innovation
Collaborative Projects

ETHICS, EQUITY, & INCLUSION

Responsible AI
Access for All
Avoiding Bias

2. CURRENT AI POLICY DEVELOPMENT STATUS

POLICY IS UNDER ACTIVE DEVELOPMENT.

KENYA'S AI STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Scaling Responsible and Inclusive AI Adoption

Detailed ahead

Governance & Trust

Data protection, cybersecurity, ethical AI, and trusted governance frameworks.

Infrastructure

Expansion of cloud infrastructure, data centres, broadband, and compute capacity.

Interoperability

Whole-of-government data sharing through enterprise architecture and interoperability frameworks.

Digital Skills

Building AI talent through universities, TVETs, innovation hubs, and youth programs.

Innovation & Startups

Supporting AI startups, research ecosystems, and smart city innovation.

Global Partnerships

Collaboration with development partners, academia, and global technology ecosystems.

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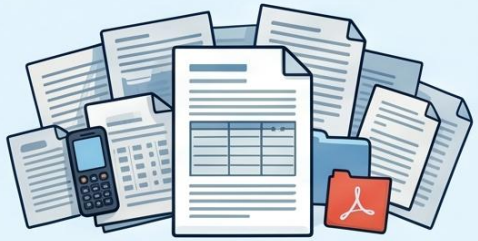
GOVERNMENT AI USE CASE: GPRIS - CENTRALIZED AI-POWERED INFORMATION SYSTEM.

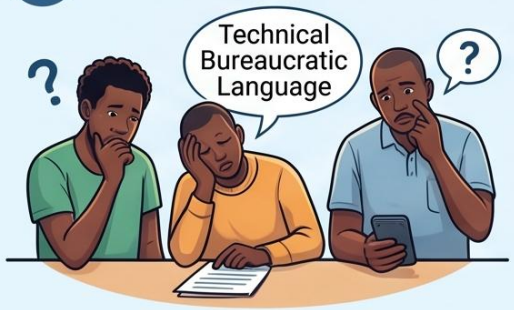
ENABLING KENYAN CITIZENS TO QUERY VERIFIED GOVERNMENT PROJECT DATA USING NATURAL LANGUAGE.

CHALLENGES GPRIS ADDRESSES

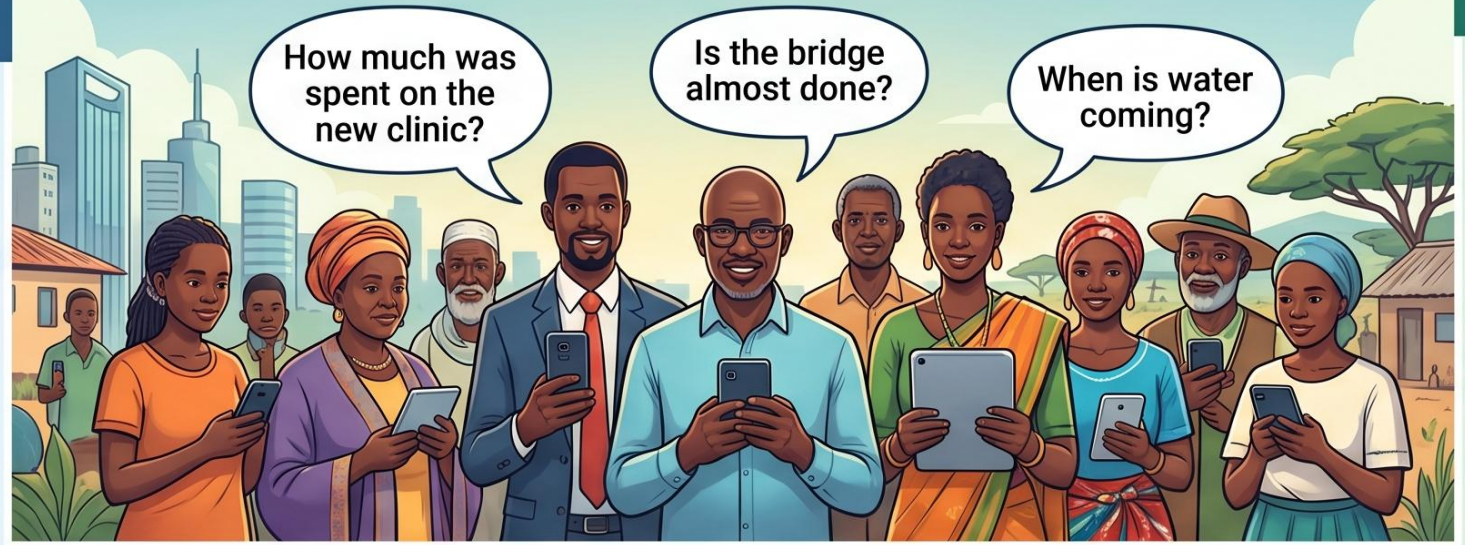
Information Asymmetry
Buried Data in PDFs & Databases



Language Barriers



Access Gaps
Rural Populations Relying on Mobile Data, unable to download heavy files heavy files or slow connection



KEY FEATURES & TECHNOLOGY

Multi-channel access
Available via WhatsApp, web interface, and SMS/ USSD, ensuring nationwide reach including basic feature phones

Powered by Meta's Llama models
- **Llama 3.3 70B** RAG
- **Llama 4 Scout** Agentic Orchestration
- **Llama 3.2 Vision** Document/Image Processing
- **Llama Guard 4** Safety

Grounded and verified responses
Draw from structured government datasets, deliver accurate, source-referenced answers, reducing misinformation/ hallucinations

Citizen-centric design
Built for accessibility across literacy and language constraints, enabling informed civic participation

SOLUTIONS THROUGH GPRIS

Simplification
Using AI to translate fiscal data into conversational, plain language

Inclusivity
Mobile-first design optimized for low-bandwidth (2G/3G) environments

Verifiability
Every AI response includes citations/ links to the source data to build trust

Sovereignty
All data and models hosted locally within Kenya, compliant with Data Protection Act, 2019

Next Steps for Kenya

Building an AI-Driven, Inclusive and Prosperous Future

NEXT STEPS

1. SCALE AI ADOPTION

Accelerate the integration of AI technologies across industries and public services.

2. STRENGTHEN POLICY FRAMEWORKS

Develop adaptive, ethical, and future-ready policies that support responsible AI innovation.

3. BRIDGE THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Expand digital infrastructure and ensure equitable access to technology.

4. INVEST IN SKILLS

Build AI and digital skills at all levels to prepare Kenya's workforce for the future.

5. PROMOTE INCLUSIVE INNOVATION

Support local innovators and startups to build AI solutions for Kenya's challenges.

PRIORITY SECTORS

1. AGRICULTURE

- Boost productivity with AI-powered solutions
- Strengthen food security and climate resilience

2. HEALTH

- Enhance diagnostics and patient care using AI
- Strengthen health systems and early detection

3. EDUCATION

- Personalize learning with AI tools
- Improve access, quality, and education outcomes

4. URBAN SYSTEM AND MOBILITY

- Optimize transport and reduce congestion
- Build smart, sustainable and resilient cities

Ahsante/Thank you

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