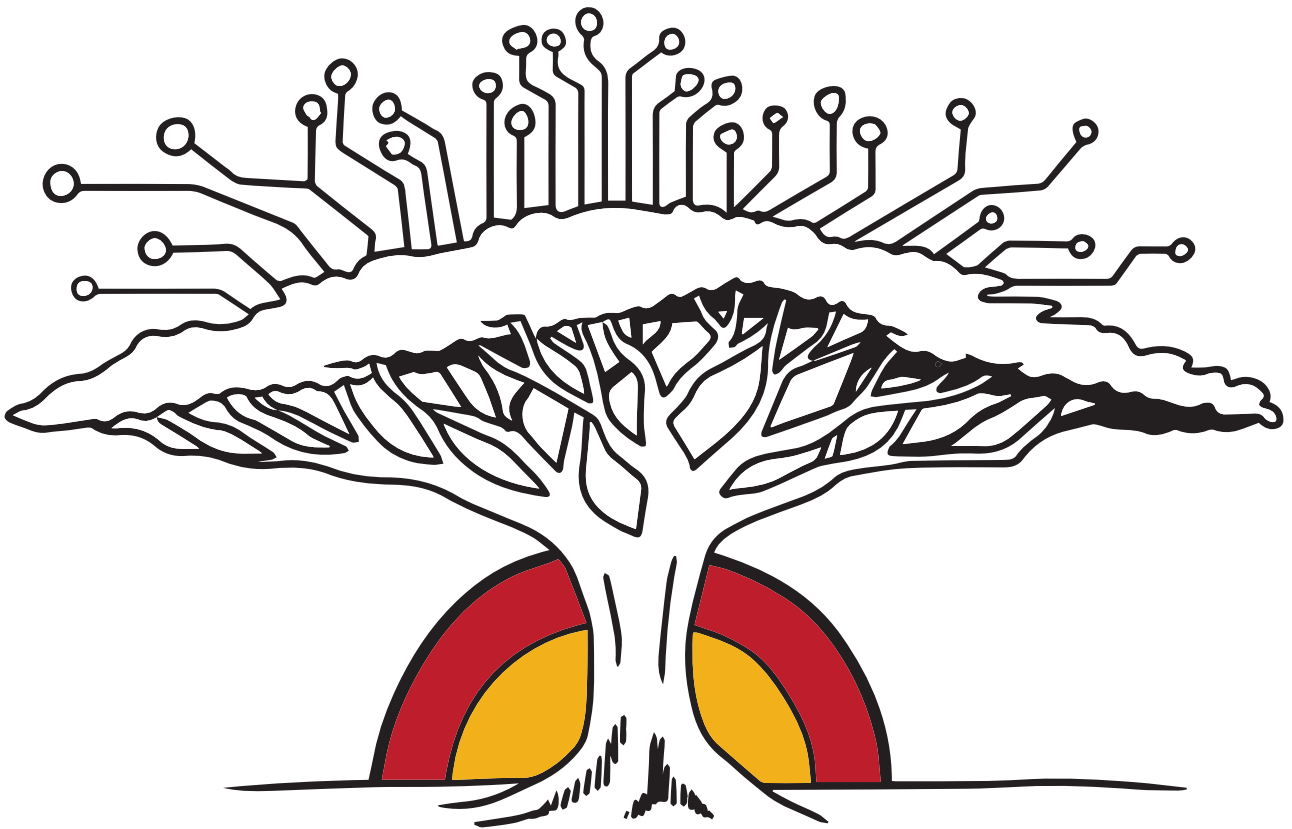




Strathmore University

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Information Technology Law*



EAST AFRICAN

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy Outlook Report.

Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations	3
Executive Summary	4
1.0 Introduction	6
1.2 The Place of Policy in East Africa's AI Ecosystem	7
1.3 Scope of the Outlook Report	9
1.4 Methodology	9
2.0 Overview of the East African AI Policy Landscape	11
3.0 Country Focus	14
3.1 Kenya	14
3.1.1 National AI Vision and Strategic Direction	14
3.1.2 Legal, Regulatory and Institutional Architecture	15
3.1.3 Data Governance and Ecosystem Readiness	17
3.1.4 Outlook and Conclusions	19
3.2 Rwanda	19
3.2.1 National AI Vision and Strategic Direction	19
3.2.2 Legal, Regulatory and Institutional Architecture	20
3.2.3 Data Governance and Ecosystem Readiness	21
3.2.4 Outlook and Conclusions	22
3.3 Tanzania	23
3.3.1 National AI Vision and Strategic Direction	23
3.3.2 Legal, Regulatory and Institutional Architecture	23
3.3.3 Data Governance and Ecosystem Readiness	24
3.3.4 Outlook and Conclusions	26
3.4 Uganda	26
3.4.1 National AI Vision and Strategic Direction	26
3.4.2 Legal, Regulatory and Institutional Architecture	29
3.4.3 Data Governance and Ecosystem Readiness	30
3.4.4 Outlook and Conclusions	31
4.0 Key Observations	32
5.0 Conclusion	35
6.0 List of References	36

List of Abbreviations

4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AU	African Union
BAKITA	Baraza la Kiswahili la Taifa (National Kiswahili Council, Tanzania)
C4IR	Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution
CIPEA	Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa
CIPIT	Centre for Intellectual Property and Information Technology Law (Strathmore University)
CMCA	Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Act (Kenya)
DKS	Draft Kenya Standard
DPA	Data Protection Act / Data Protection Authority
DPPA	Data Protection and Privacy Act (Uganda)
EAC	East African Community
EASTECO	East African Science and Technology Commission
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation (European Union)
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Development Cooperation)
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IoT	Internet of Things
IP	Intellectual Property
KEBS	Kenya Bureau of Standards
KECOBO	Kenya Copyright Board
KIPI	Kenya Industrial Property Institute
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
MCK	Media Council of Kenya
MICDE	Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy (Kenya)
MINICT	Ministry of ICT and Innovation (Rwanda)
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NC4	National Computer and Cybercrimes Coordination Committee (Kenya)
NDPIV	Fourth National Development Plan (Uganda)
NITA-U	National Information Technology Authority Uganda
NOODL	Nwulite Obodo Open Data License
ODPC	Office of the Data Protection Commissioner (Kenya)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PDPA	Personal Data Protection Act (Tanzania)
PDPC	Personal Data Protection Commission (Tanzania)

RAI	Responsible Artificial Intelligence
RAM	Readiness Assessment Methodology (UNESCO)
RISA	Rwanda Information Society Authority
RURA	Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
STI	Science, Technology and Innovation
TCRA	Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

Executive Summary

Artificial intelligence is becoming increasingly relevant to public administration, economic development, research and service delivery across East Africa. As its use expands, governments are considering how existing laws, institutions and digital-development priorities apply to AI, while also developing more specific strategies, policies and governance arrangements. These processes are unfolding within national contexts that differ in their legal frameworks, institutional structures, infrastructure and patterns of technology adoption. Consequently, the region's AI policy landscape is developing through several interconnected pathways, including national strategy development, data governance, readiness assessments, sectoral guidance, institutional coordination and practical applications. Understanding this landscape requires attention to how these different elements interact and the direction they indicate within each country.

The East African AI Policy Outlook Report examines these developments in Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. Drawing on a systematic review of publicly available policies, legislation, institutional publications and relevant research, it considers each country's AI governance ecosystem across three parameters: national AI vision and strategic direction; legal, regulatory and institutional architecture; and data governance and ecosystem readiness. Sectoral priorities and applications are examined within these parameters according to how they inform national policy direction, contribute to the legal and regulatory environment, or demonstrate the development of institutional and technical readiness. The report provides a qualitative and comparative account of the four national landscapes without assigning scores or ranking countries. It is intended to establish a baseline against which policy developments, implementation signals, and changes in national direction may be tracked over time.

The country profiles show that all four countries are moving towards more deliberate approaches to AI governance, although their policy sequences and areas of emphasis differ. Kenya and Rwanda have adopted national AI instruments and are developing associated coordination, data-governance and implementation arrangements. Tanzania and Uganda are developing national AI strategies alongside readiness-assessment processes, drawing on existing digital, data protection, science and technology, and development frameworks. Across the four countries, constitutional protections and data-protection legislation remain important legal foundations, while newer policies, standards, sectoral guidelines, research initiatives and infrastructure programmes are contributing to the wider governance environment. The Outlook also considers the emerging regional dimension, including the East African Community's developing AI policy process. The outlook report presents a region in which AI policy approaches are becoming more clearly articulated, while questions concerning implementation, institutional coordination, data governance, technical capacity and regional cooperation continue to shape their evolution.

1.0

INTRODUCTION



Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly reshaping economies, governance systems, and social fabrics across the globe. For the African continent, and East Africa in particular, AI represents both a transformational opportunity and a complex governance challenge.¹ As AI technologies become increasingly embedded in critical sectors from agriculture and healthcare to financial services and public administration, the imperative to develop coherent, contextually grounded, and rights-respecting AI policy frameworks has never been more urgent.² The deployment of AI technologies is growing across the African continent, while policy responses remain in their early stages. Sound policy approaches are therefore needed to enable African nations to build AI ecosystems that are inclusive, socially beneficial, and adequately integrated with the realities of the African AI ecosystem.³

Across Africa, AI policymaking has gradually accelerated, characterised by a growing

number of national governments developing AI strategies, establishing institutional frameworks, and engaging in continental and global AI governance dialogues. The foundation of AI governance in the region is currently grounded in the AU Continental AI Strategy (2024), which translates these principles into Africa-specific development priorities. The Continental AI Strategy, endorsed by the African Union Executive Council during its 45th Ordinary Session held in Accra, Ghana, on 18–19 July 2024, marked a major turning point for AI governance in Africa. As the first continent-wide framework on AI, it seeks to guide AU Member States in the responsible, ethical, and development-oriented development and deployment of AI.⁴ The strategy calls for an Africa-owned, people-centred approach that accelerates AI capabilities in infrastructure, talent, datasets, innovation, and partnerships, while ensuring adequate safeguards and protection aligned with Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals.⁵

The Summit culminated in the adoption of the

¹Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Understanding Africa's AI Governance Landscape: Insights from Policy Practice and Dialogue* (2025). <https://carnegieendowment.org/posts/2025/09/understanding-africas-ai-governance-landscape-insights-from-policy-practice-and-dialogue> accessed 7 April 2026

²CIPIT, *State of AI in Africa Report (2025)* <https://aiconference.cipit.org/documents/the-state-of-ai-in-africa-report.pdf> accessed 7 April 2026

³ibid

⁴African Union, *Continental Artificial Intelligence Strategy: Harnessing AI for Africa's Development and Prosperity* (African Union 2024) 3 https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/44004-doc-EN-Continental_AI_Strategy_July_2024.pdf accessed 7 May 2026.

⁵ibid.

Africa Declaration on Artificial Intelligence, which sets out commitments across seven priority pillars covering talent development, data, infrastructure, markets, investment, governance and institutional cooperation, and which endorses the establishment of an Africa AI Council under the Smart Africa Steering Committee to coordinate implementation. The Declaration aligns itself with the African Union Continental AI Strategy, the Smart Africa AI for Africa Blueprint and the African Union Data Policy Framework, and it was endorsed by forty-nine African countries, the African Union, and Smart Africa.⁶

At the sub-regional level, East Africa is emerging as a dynamic hub of AI innovation and governance experimentation. Rwanda, through its National AI Policy, has established the Responsible AI Office.⁷ Kenya launched its National AI Strategy 2025–2030 in March 2025, aiming to become Africa’s leading AI hub through pillars of infrastructure, research, talent, governance, investment, and ethics.⁸ Ethiopia has developed and is implementing its national AI strategy; Uganda has established a National AI Taskforce to develop a comprehensive national strategy; and Tanzania has released a draft AI strategy currently under discussion.⁹

Complementing these national developments,

⁶ Africa Declaration on Artificial Intelligence (Global AI Summit on Africa, Kigali, 4 April 2025) <https://c4ir.rw/docs/Africa%20Declaration%20on%20Artificial%20Intelligences.pdf> ; see also Jane Munga and others, ‘Understanding Africa’s AI Governance Landscape: Insights from Policy Practice and Dialogue’ (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace) accessed 8 April 2026 <https://carnegieendowment.org/posts/2025/09/understanding-africas-ai-governance-landscape-in-sights-from-policy-practice-and-dialogue> accessed 7 May 2026

⁷Ministry of ICT and Innovation (Rwanda), The National AI Policy (Republic of Rwanda 2023). https://www.minict.gov.rw/fileadmin/user_upload/minict_user_upload/Documents/Policies/Artificial_Intelligence_Policy.pdf accessed 9 May 2026

⁸Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy, Kenya Artificial Intelligence Strategy 2025–2030 (MICDE 2025) 7 <https://ict.go.ke/sites/default/files/2025-03/Kenya%20AI%20Strategy%202025%20-%202030.pdf> accessed 9 May 2026.

⁹The United Republic of Tanzania, National Artificial Intelligence Readiness Report (United Nations 2025); see also, Fiona Luboga, ‘Ministry Engages Stakeholders on Uganda’s National AI & Emerging Technologies Strategy’ (13 March 2026) <https://ict.go.ug/media/news/ministry-engages-stakeholders-on-ugandas-national-emerging-technologies-strategy> accessed 9 May 2026

the East African Community (EAC) has moved toward a coordinated regional approach. At the 4th EAC Regional Science, Technology and Innovation Conference held in Kigali in March 2026, ministers responsible for science, technology and innovation, ICT, education and EAC affairs adopted an EAC Declaration on Artificial Intelligence, which supports the development of national AI policies aligned with a regional framework and calls for a coordinated regional AI capability, including a proposed EAC AI Alliance and a Regional Centre of Excellence for Emerging Technologies.¹⁰ Additionally, work on a regional AI framework, the EAC AI Strategy, is being coordinated by the East African Science and Technology Commission (EASTECO) together with the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA).¹¹ The regional approach aims to accelerate the responsible adoption of AI across priority sectors, including public administration, healthcare and agriculture, while ensuring that lower-capacity member states can also benefit from technological advances.¹² By fostering regional interoperability and maintaining a unified voice in global norm-setting, the EAC seeks to leverage AI as a powerful catalyst for economic integration and shared prosperity across all member states.¹³

1.2 The Place of Policy in East Africa’s AI Ecosystem

In the East African context, AI policy serves multiple interconnected purposes. It provides a normative framework for the ethical deployment of AI systems, signalling a country’s priorities and values in the AI age, and creates the

¹⁰East African Science and Technology Commission and Inter-University Council for East Africa, Artificial Intelligence for a Resilient, Inclusive and Innovative East Africa: Proceedings from the 4th EAC Regional Science, Technology and Innovation Conference (2026) 120–122 <http://www.sti.easteco.org> accessed 9 May 2026

¹¹Inter-University Council for East Africa, ‘East Africa Takes a Defining Step toward a Regional AI Network’ (1 April 2026) <https://iucea.org/east-africa-takes-a-defining-step-toward-a-regional-ai-network/> accessed 24 July 2026.

¹²EASTECO Conference Concept Note (Thematic Sectors, and Strategy Framing) <https://sti.easteco.org/documents/concept-note.pdf> accessed 9 May 2026

¹³ibid

institutional architecture for oversight and enforcement, positioning countries to engage credibly in regional and global AI governance dialogues.¹⁴ As such, governance frameworks developed for African contexts should consider how relevant socio-cultural and legal values apply across specific AI domains, recognising that the development and use of AI are influenced by the contexts in which they occur.¹⁵

Many activities associated with the development and use of AI already fall within existing legal and regulatory frameworks.¹⁶ Constitutional protections for privacy, equality and non-discrimination apply to AI-related conduct, while data protection laws regulate the processing of personal data and, in some jurisdictions, address aspects of automated decision-making. Consumer protection and sector-specific frameworks may impose additional obligations.¹⁷ The use of AI, therefore, does not displace these instruments, which remain binding wherever their provisions apply.

However, the characteristics of AI systems may create or intensify issues that existing frameworks do not address with sufficient clarity.¹⁸ These include the opacity of automated decision-making, the potential for biased training data to produce discriminatory outcomes, the provenance and governance of training datasets, and the allocation of responsibility where AI systems contribute to

harm.¹⁹ AI policy should therefore be understood as a mechanism for setting strategic direction, coordinating institutional responsibilities and clarifying how existing laws apply to AI. It can also identify areas requiring additional regulatory guidance, stronger enforcement or, where supported by clear evidence of a regulatory gap, targeted legal reform. A clear observation across the East African region is that policy development is accelerating, shaped by the evolving AI ecosystem and efforts to respond to its needs.

Notwithstanding, the ecosystem is still characterised by structural challenges such as weak institutional frameworks, limited technical capacity among regulators, fragmented legal landscapes, and inadequate enforcement mechanisms.²⁰ Further, it is noted that AI ethics concepts such as human rights, transparency, and fairness carry different meanings across socio-cultural and political contexts, necessitating governance frameworks that are genuinely embedded in African realities rather than transplanted from elsewhere.²¹ Policy must therefore be understood not merely as a document but as an ongoing, multi-stakeholder process that requires sustained political will, adequate resourcing, cross-sector collaboration, and meaningful engagement with the communities most likely to be affected by AI deployment.²² In the East African context, this calls for governance arrangements that are developed alongside the institutional capacity, data foundations and sectoral practices needed to give them effect, guided by locally grounded evidence, constitutional and human rights

¹⁴Arthur Gwagwa and others, 'Artificial Intelligence (AI) Deployments in Africa: Benefits, Challenges and Policy Dimensions' (2020) 26 The African Journal of Information and Communication <https://doi.org/10.23962/10539/30361> accessed 9 May 2026.

¹⁵Damian Okaibedi Eke, Kutoma Wakunuma and Simisola Akintoye (eds), *Responsible AI in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities* (Palgrave Macmillan 2023) <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-08215-3> accessed 9 May 2026.

¹⁶Dr Akhil Kumar and Dr Harshita Dadhich, 'Regulatory Frameworks for Artificial Intelligence in Law: Ensuring Accountability and Fairness' (2024) 9(2) NUJS Journal of Regulatory Studies. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/382517151_REGULATORY_FRAMEWORKS_FOR_ARTIFICIAL_INTELLIGENCE_IN_LAW_ENSUREING_ACCOUNTABILITY_AND_FAIRNESS accessed 9 May 2026

¹⁷ibid

¹⁸Research ICT Africa, *Just AI: Framework of Inquiry* (Research ICT Africa 2025). <https://researchictafrica.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/JustAI-Framework-of-Inquiry-Research-ICT-Africa-2025.pdf> accessed 9 May 2026

¹⁹ibid

²⁰OECD, 'AI Governance in Africa' in OECD Artificial Intelligence Case Studies (OECD 2026) https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/oecd-artificial-intelligence-case-studies_c517fcf5-en/ai-governance-in-africa_1ff55135-en.html accessed 9 May 2026.

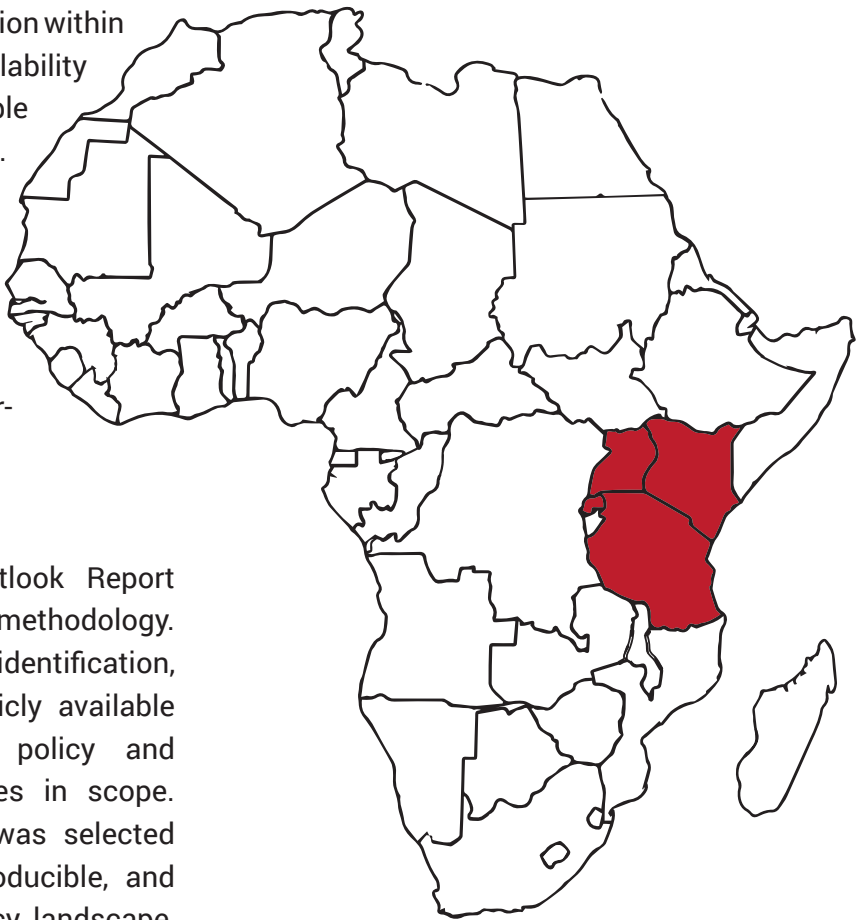
²¹Kutoma Wakunuma and others, 'Responsible AI, SDGs, and AI Governance in Africa' (2024) 5 AI and Ethics; see also Arthur Gwagwa and others (n14)

²²Olajide Olugbade, 'In Search of a Global Governance Mechanism for Artificial Intelligence (AI): A Collective Action Perspective' (2025) 5 *Global Public Policy and Governance* 139, 141–42, 153–55 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43508-025-00113-z>

principles, regional priorities and sustained public participation. The effectiveness of these frameworks will ultimately depend not only on the strength of their stated commitments, but also on whether states possess the institutional readiness and accountability mechanisms necessary to translate them into practice.

1.3 Scope of the Outlook Report

The East Africa AI Policy Outlook covers the key members of the East African region, focusing on Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, and Tanzania. These countries were selected based on their EAC membership and geographic location within East Africa as well as the availability of sufficient policy data to enable meaningful comparative analysis. The report covers AI governance instruments, including national AI strategies, AI-related legislation and regulations, data protection frameworks, institutional mandates, and sector-specific policies where available.



1.4 Methodology

The East Africa AI Policy Outlook Report adopts a systematic desk review methodology. This approach involved the identification, collection, and analysis of publicly available documentary sources on AI policy and governance across the countries in scope. The desk review methodology was selected to provide comprehensive, reproducible, and systematic coverage of the policy landscape, and encompasses categories of sources, which include primary policy documents, i.e., National AI strategies, AI-related legislation, data protection laws, digital economy policies, and sector-specific regulatory instruments published by governments across the region, continental and international frameworks, institutional and regulatory publications, peer-reviewed academic literature and policy research, institutional research reports, and

media and specialised databases.

It is important to acknowledge the inherent limitations of a desk review approach. The availability and accessibility of policy documentation vary significantly across the countries in scope, and not all relevant policy deliberations result in published documents. In some cases, AI governance frameworks exist in draft or informal form, or are embedded within broader digital economy policies, making their identification and assessment more challenging. The findings and analysis presented in this Outlook Report reflect the state of AI policy and governance in East Africa as documented in publicly available sources at the time of research. Given the rapidly evolving nature of the AI governance landscape, certain developments may have occurred after the research period, as such, this report is intended as a baseline for ongoing monitoring and comparative analysis.

Following the identification and collection of documentary sources, the study applied a common analytical framework to the four countries in scope. The unit of analysis was each country's national AI governance

ecosystem, understood as the combination of policies, legislation, institutions, infrastructure, implementation initiatives and normative safeguards that shape the development and use of AI. Rather than assessing individual instruments in isolation, the study considered how these different components operate together and whether they provide a coherent foundation for responsible AI governance.

Each country was assessed across three analytical parameters, namely national AI vision and strategic direction; legal, regulatory, and institutional architecture; and data governance and ecosystem readiness. Applying these common parameters made it possible to identify similarities and differences across the four countries while preserving the distinct legal and institutional context of each jurisdiction.

For purposes of this outlook report, AI policy encompasses the strategic, regulatory and normative instruments through which public authorities guide the development, deployment and use of artificial intelligence, including national strategies, legislation, regulations, ethical principles, standards and voluntary guidelines.

2.0

OVERVIEW OF THE EAST AFRICAN AI LANDSCAPE

The East African AI landscape is developing on varying levels, with some countries ahead of others. They have all made critical strides in policy and framework development, which have helped lay the foundation for future AI governance.

Kenya has taken steps to develop its national AI ecosystem through the National Artificial Intelligence Strategy (2025–2030), which sets out the government’s ambition to position the country as a leading AI hub in Africa, with a focus on model innovation, economic growth and social inclusion.²³ It aims to achieve sustainable development while embedding strong data sovereignty, cybersecurity, and ethical oversight into AI deployment. It is supported by foundational laws, including the Data Protection Act (2019), Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Act (2018), Intellectual Property laws, and the Consumer Protection Act (2012). Other relevant instruments include the Draft Kenya Standard DKS 3007:2024, Information Technology: Code of Practice for AI Applications, which guides the responsible development, deployment and use of AI. The Constitution of Kenya 2010 also establishes broader rights and governance principles

against which the development and use of AI may be assessed, including human dignity, equality, non-discrimination and privacy.²⁴

Rwanda has also made progress in development through its National AI Policy, which aims to leverage AI to power economic growth, improve the quality of life, and position Rwanda as a global innovator in responsible and inclusive AI.²⁵ It makes 14 policy recommendations and focuses on 6 key priority areas to target.²⁶ These areas largely focus on increasing accessibility and innovation whilst mitigating risks presented by AI. This policy is supported by the AI Readiness and Maturity framework, which seeks to inform policy interventions and investment decisions for both the government and private actors.²⁷ It includes indicators for the six priority areas outlined in the National AI Policy. Finally, the Rwanda AI Scaling Hub is

²⁴Kenya Bureau of Standards, 'Information Technology -Artificial Intelligence -Code of Practice for AI Applications' (Data Guidance 2024) 2 <https://www.dataguidance.com/sites/default/files/kebs-tc_094_n66_public_review_kenya_standard_dks_3007_ai_code_of_practice.pdf>. Constitution of Kenya, Articles 27, 28 and 31(d).

²⁵Africa Data Protection, *Artificial Intelligence Policy (Africa Data Protection, 2023)* <<https://africadataprotection.org/sources/Artificial-Intelligence-Policy.pdf>> accessed 5 April 2026.

²⁶Ibid 2-5.

²⁷Ministry of ICT and innovation (Rwanda), *AI Readiness and Maturity framework for Rwanda* (Government of Rwanda, October 2022) <https://www.minict.gov.rw/fileadmin/user_upload/minict_user_upload/Documents/Policies/AI_Readiness_and_Maturity_Framework_for_Rwanda.pdf> accessed 10 April 2026.

²³Ministry of Information Communication and the Digital Economy, 'Kenya Artificial Intelligence Strategy 2025-2030' (MICDE 2025).

being actualised, with several flagship projects focused on improving the sectors of Healthcare, Agriculture and Education.²⁸

Tanzania's AI policy landscape is characterised by a sectoral approach with the development of the National Guidelines for Artificial Intelligence in Education and the Policy Framework for AI in Tanzania's health sector.²⁹ The ecosystem is further guided by foundational laws such as the Personal Data Protection Act (2022)³⁰ which establishes principles for the collection, processing, storage, and dissemination of personal data. Tanzania is also taking a deliberate approach to evaluating its AI ecosystem and readiness for AI adoption, as reflected in the completion of its first National AI Readiness Assessment.³¹ The assessment emphasises the ethical adoption of AI, guided by principles of human rights, transparency, fairness, privacy, inclusivity and sustainable development. When considered alongside the country's existing legal and policy instruments, it provides a basis for examining AI governance through specific sectors and use cases.³² This emphasis on ecosystem readiness and practical applications is a distinctive feature of Tanzania's evolving approach to AI governance. The report emphasises the ethical adoption of AI aligned with human rights, transparency,

fairness, privacy, inclusivity, and sustainable development. Tanzania has also taken steps towards sector-specific AI policy development, such as a policy framework for AI in its health sector to guide integration of AI into healthcare service delivery and data management, and national sector guidelines on AI applications in education.³³

Uganda's ecosystem is noticeably evolving as the National AI and Emerging Technologies strategy is in the developmental stages guided by the Ministry of ICT and a national AI task force alongside a UNESCO-supported readiness assessment.³⁴ In the past few years, there have been a few progressions in the digital landscape which provide a foundation for AI policy development. These are, the National Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Policy, which is the main policy framework that guides the ICT sector;³⁵ the National Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Policy, which establishes the overarching framework for scientific and technological advancement in Uganda;³⁶ the National Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) Strategy,³⁷ which highlights the application of AI within the public sector, particularly in enhancing financial management and strengthening tax revenue collection by the Uganda Revenue Authority and Uganda's Fourth National Development Plan (NDP4) which identifies AI and cloud computing as essential, scalable, and cost-

²⁸ Rwanda Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, 'New Rwanda AI Scaling Hub announced at Global AI Summit of Africa' (4 April 2025) <<https://c4ir.rw/global-ai-summit-on-africa/news/New-Rwanda-AI-Scaling-Hub-Announced-at-Global-AI-Summit-on-Africa>> Accessed 15 April 2026.

²⁹ National Guidelines for Artificial Intelligence in Education <https://www.moe.go.tz/sites/default/files/NATIONAL%20GUIDELINES%20FOR%20ARTIFICIAL%20INTELLIGENCE%20N%20EDUCATION.pdf>; also see Policy Framework for AI in Tanzania's Health Sector. <https://www.moh.go.tz/storage/app/uploads/public/65c/61f/590/65c-61f59087ac486047849.pdf>

³⁰ The Personal Data Protection Act (United Republic of Tanzania) GN No 395B of 13 June 2023 (English version, published pursuant to section 84(4) of the Interpretation of Laws Act, Ch 1) Cap 44, Act No 11 of 2022 https://www.pdpc.go.tz/media/media/THE_PERSONAL_DATA_PROTECTION_ACT.pdf accessed 12 Feb 2026.

³¹ UNESCO, 'UNESCO supports Consultations for AI Readiness Assessment in Tanzania' (UNESCO, 21 March 2025) <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unesco-supports-consultations-ai-readiness-assessment-tanzania> accessed 12 Feb 2026.

³² Artificial Intelligence Readiness Assessment Report: Tanzania. (UNESCO, 2025) <https://tanzania.un.org/sites/default/files/2025-07/National%20AI%20Readiness%20Report.pdf>

³³ *ibid*

National Guidelines for Artificial Intelligence in Education (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, United Republic of Tanzania, January 2025) <http://www.moe.go.tz/sites/default/files/NATIONAL%20GUIDELINES%20FOR%20ARTIFICIAL%20INTELLIGENCE%20N%20EDUCATION.pdf> accessed 12 Feb 2026.

³⁴ Fiona Luboga, Ministry Engages Stakeholders on Uganda's National AI & Emerging Technologies Strategy (13 March 2026) <<https://ict.go.ug/media/news/ministry-engages-stakeholders-on-ugandas-national-ai-emerging-technologies-strategy>> accessed 14 April 2026.

³⁵ Ministry of Information and Communications Technology, National Information and Communications Technology Policy for Uganda <https://ict.go.ug/site/documents/ICT_Policy_2014.pdf> accessed 13 April 2026.

³⁶ Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, National Science, Technology and Innovation Policy <<https://uncst.go.ug/files/downloads/National%20STI%20Policy%202009.pdf>>

³⁷ Ministry of ICT and National Guidance, Uganda's National 4IR Strategy <<https://ict.go.ug/site/documents/Executive-Summary-Ugandas-National-4IR-Strategy.pdf>> accessed 13 April 2026.

effective infrastructure tools.³⁸

The developments highlighted above reflect the varied and, in some instances, similar pathways Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda are taking towards AI innovation and governance. Existing frameworks provide foundations upon which more comprehensive and AI-specific approaches may be developed. Notably, these developments point to a regional landscape that is becoming more structured, although the pace, scope and level of implementation

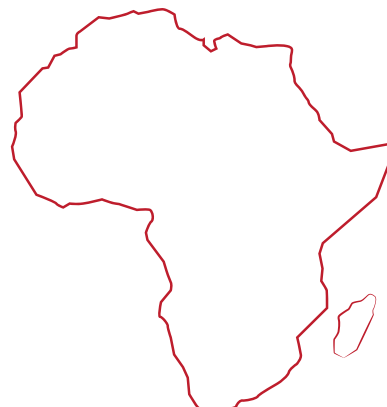
³⁸Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, *Fourth National Development Plan (NDP) 2025/26-2029/30* <<https://create.finance.go.ug/publicationsresources/fourth-national-development-plan-ndpiv>> accessed 13 April 2026.

continue to differ across countries. Additionally, across the region, the adoption or development of strategies and policy instruments does not, by itself, establish how fully their objectives have been implemented. Publicly available research points to recurring implementation questions concerning institutional coordination, regulatory capacity, skills, data quality and infrastructure. These are governance and capacity questions that shape how policies and existing laws operate. The country profiles therefore distinguish formal adoption from observable implementation signals such as designated institutions, monitoring frameworks, sectoral guidance and deployed programmes.



3.0

COUNTRY FOCUS



3.1 Kenya

3.1.1 National AI Vision and Strategic Direction

Kenya officially launched its National Artificial Intelligence Strategy (2025-2030) in March 2025, marking a significant step toward positioning the country as an AI leader in Africa. The strategy was developed through extensive deliberations between the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy (MICDE) and civil society, the private sector, academia and international partners, to set the country's priorities regarding Artificial Intelligence.³⁹ The development of the strategy was preceded by broader national digital transformation instruments, particularly the Digital Economy Blueprint and the Kenya National Digital Master Plan (2022–2032), which together set out the country's long-term vision for an inclusive, innovation-led digital economy.⁴⁰ The Strategy envisions Kenya as Africa's leading AI hub for model innovation to foster economic growth

and social inclusion and achieve sustainable development, while embedding strong data sovereignty, cybersecurity and ethical oversight in AI deployment.⁴¹

The Strategy sets out its direction through three foundational pillars, being digital infrastructure, data, and research and innovation, supported by four cross-cutting enablers covering governance, talent development, investment, and ethics, equity and inclusion. This structure is intended to align AI development with national development priorities rather than to treat AI as a standalone sector.⁴² The Strategy further identifies priority areas for AI application, including agriculture, healthcare, education, public service delivery and financial services, and sets out an implementation approach based on phased delivery, institutional coordination through a national AI governance structure, and monitoring against defined indicators.⁴³ Taken together, these elements indicate a strategic direction that couples sectoral ambition with a governance and implementation architecture, and they provide the framework against which

³⁹Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data, 'Kenya National AI Strategy' (Data4sdgs.org 2025) <<https://www.data4sdgs.org/resources/kenya-national-ai-strategy>>. Accessed 24 April 2026

⁴⁰Ministry of Information Communication and the Digital Economy, 'Kenya Artificial Intelligence Strategy 2025-2030' (MICDE 2025) 35 <<https://ict.go.ke/sites/default/files/2025-03/Kenya%20AI%20Strategy%202025%20-%202030.pdf>>. Accessed 24 April 2026

⁴¹Ministry of Information Communication and the Digital Economy, 'Kenya Artificial Intelligence Strategy 2025-2030' (MICDE 2025) 7

⁴²Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy, 'Kenya Artificial Intelligence Strategy 2025-2030' (MICDE 2025) 12-16.

⁴³Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy, 'Kenya Artificial Intelligence Strategy 2025-2030' (MICDE 2025) 50-58.

the legal, data and sectoral developments discussed in the following sections can be read. Kenya's strategic direction is further anchored in the Constitution of Kenya, 2010, whose Bill of Rights guarantees rights that apply directly to AI-related conduct, including equality and freedom from discrimination, human dignity and the right to privacy. These provisions remain binding and inform the ethical safeguards adopted in the National AI Strategy, providing a constitutional foundation on which more specific AI policy and regulation can be built.⁴⁴

Notably, Kenya is in the process of finalising its National AI and Emerging Technologies Policy. The policy, while still in draft, provides 'a comprehensive national framework to guide the development, deployment, governance, and use of AI and other Emerging Technologies in Kenya and seeks to ensure that these technologies advance public interest, safeguard rights, promote inclusion, and support sustainable development.'⁴⁵

Additionally, its provisions apply to key thematic areas, including data governance, digital infrastructure, research and innovation, skills development, and strategic sovereignty and adopts a hybrid governance model that combines central policy coordination through a National AI and Emerging Technologies Council with implementation across relevant public institutions, county governments, academia, industry, and other stakeholders.⁴⁶

Further towards realising the strategic direction for AI, a Standing Cabinet Committee on Artificial

Intelligence to steer the implementation of Kenya's National AI Strategy has been established with the key purpose of translating the Strategy's commitments into coordinated government action. The Committee provides an important opportunity to establish high-level oversight, clarify implementation priorities and strengthen coordination among the ministries and agencies responsible for delivering the Strategy. Kenya's strategic approach and vision therefore reflect a shift towards a more coordinated, implementation-oriented AI governance approach, underpinned by constitutional values, responsible innovation, and an ambition to strengthen Kenya's AI governance ecosystem while ensuring that AI contributes to inclusive and sustainable development.

3.1.2 Legal, Regulatory and Institutional Architecture

Kenya's legal, regulatory and institutional architecture is characterised by foundational laws which in part inform the regulation of AI. Foundational laws such as the Data Protection Act 2019, the Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Act 2018, Intellectual Property laws, and the Consumer Protection Act 2012 contain relevant provisions that can be leveraged in the regulation of AI. Further framing the legal, regulatory and institutional architecture are Kenya's technical and standardisation mechanisms for AI tools. The Kenya Standard 'DKS 3007:2024 - Information Technology: Code of Practice for AI Applications,' released by the Kenya Bureau of Standards for public comments in 2024, provides the code of practice for responsible development, deployment and use of AI.⁴⁷ The code outlines approaches to establish trust through transparency, explainability and controllability, as well as guidance on

⁴⁴Constitution of Kenya 2010, arts 27 (equality and freedom from discrimination), 28 (human dignity) and 31 (privacy).

⁴⁵Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy, Kenya Artificial Intelligence and other Emerging Technologies Policy (2026) https://ict.go.ke/sites/default/files/2026-07/Draft%20Kenya%20Artificial%20Intelligence%20and%20Other%20Emerging%20Technologies%20Policy%20-%20July%202027_0.pdf

⁴⁶At the time of publishing of this report the Draft National Policy on AI and Emerging Technologies had just been published was open to comments and public participation, see <https://gaa.go.ke/sites/default/files/2026-07/MyGov%20July%2021%2C%202026.pdf>

⁴⁷Kenya Bureau of Standards, 'Information Technology -Artificial Intelligence -Code of Practice for AI Applications' (Data Guidance 2024) <https://www.dataguidance.com/sites/default/files/kebs-tc_094_n66_public_review_kenya_standard_dks_3007_ai_code_of_practice.pdf>.

engineering risks and mitigation techniques.⁴⁸ In this way, KEBS anchors Kenya's AI governance framework at the level of technical standards, complementing the roles of other regulatory and policymaking bodies in regulating AI.

Kenya's institutional frameworks for Artificial Intelligence adopt both a sectoral and centralised structure. The main regulator overseeing the digital ecosystem is the Communications Authority, established by the Kenya Information and Communications Act to license and regulate information and communication services.⁴⁹ The Authority has very quickly adapted its regulatory mandate to Artificial Intelligence, through a regulatory sandbox for testing of AI-driven ICT products, while the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy develops a national AI policy that will eventually enable sector-specific regulations.⁵⁰ This mandate stems from Kenya's National AI Strategy, which aims to foster innovation while guarding against risks like privacy violations, bias, deepfakes and cyberthreats, with a recorded 441% surge in cyberthreats between October and December 2025.⁵¹

The Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy (MICDE) is the country's lead policymaking body for technology governance, including AI and emerging technologies. MICDE chairs the National AI Steering Committee under the National AI Strategy 2025–2030, overseeing policy implementation and inter-agency coordination. The Ministry also spearheads the forthcoming national AI policy, which will assign downstream regulatory institutions, including the Communications Authority, sector-specific mandates.

⁴⁸Kenya Bureau of Standards, 'Information Technology -Artificial Intelligence -Code of Practice for AI Applications' (Data Guidance 2024) 2

⁴⁹Kenya Information and Communications Act, section 5

⁵⁰Communications Authority, 'Authority Calls for Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence as World Marks Safer Internet Day | Communications Authority of Kenya' (Ca.go.ke2026) <https://www.ca.go.ke/authority-calls-responsible-use-artificial-intelligence-world-marks-safer-internet-day> accessed 06 May 2026.

⁵¹ibid

The National Computer and Cybercrimes Coordination Committee (NC4) is a multi-agency entity established under the Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Act (CMCA) No. 5 of 2018,⁵² mandated with advising the government on security matters regarding blockchain technology, critical infrastructure, and mobile money; advising the National Security Council on computer and cybercrimes; coordinating national security organs on cybercrime matters; and establishing codes of cybersecurity practice and performance standards for owners of critical information infrastructure.⁵³ Its existing mandate provides room for NC4 to assume an advisory role for the government and the National Security Council on AI and cybersecurity matters.

The Media Council of Kenya (MCK) exercises oversight over AI use in the media ecosystem, including synthetic media and automated content. The Council's Media Handbook for Reporting on Artificial Intelligence in Kenya⁵⁴ and Media Guide on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Kenya (2025)⁵⁵ establish key principles for ethical use, drawing on the Kenyan Constitution, human rights frameworks and global principle-setting documents like the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of AI.⁵⁶ These guides by the Council provide a roadmap for media enterprises to integrate AI responsibly, adhering to principles of transparency, accountability, data protection and the critical role of human oversight in AI-assisted journalism.⁵⁷

An observable development is the introduction

⁵²Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Act 2018, section the Its4

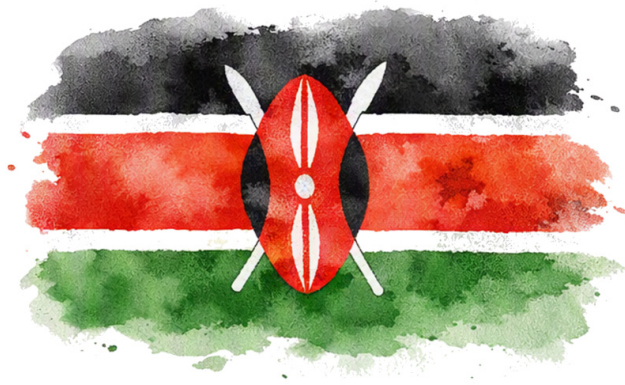
⁵³Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Act 2018, section 6

⁵⁴Media Council of Kenya, 'A Media Handbook for Reporting on Artificial Intelligence in Kenya' (2025) <<https://mediacouncil.or.ke/sites/default/files/downloads/MEDIA%20HANDBOOK%20FOR%20REPORTING%20ON%20ARTIFICIAL%20INTELLIGENCE%20IN%20KENYA.pdf>> accessed 11 May 2026.

⁵⁵Media Council of Kenya, 'Media Guide on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Kenya' (2025) <<https://mediacouncil.or.ke/sites/default/files/downloads/MEDIA%20GUIDE%20ON%20THE%20USE%20OF%20ARTIFICIAL%20INTELLIGENCE%20IN%20KENYA.pdf>>. accessed 10 May 2026

⁵⁶ibid

⁵⁷Media Council of Kenya n55



An observable development is the introduction of the Artificial Intelligence Bill 2026 in the Senate, representing an effort to establish AI-specific legislation in Kenya.

of the Artificial Intelligence Bill 2026⁵⁸ in the Senate, representing an effort to establish AI-specific legislation in Kenya. Its introduction prompted discussion about the sequencing of AI governance instruments, particularly whether dedicated legislation should precede or follow the implementation of the National AI Strategy and the finalisation of the National AI and Emerging Technologies Policy. At the time the Bill was introduced, the Strategy had only recently entered the implementation stage, while the Policy remained under development. Consequently, the institutional and regulatory effects of these foundational instruments had not yet been fully observed, raising questions about how the proposed legislation would relate to and build upon the emerging policy framework.

3.1.3 Data Governance and Ecosystem Readiness

Kenya's data governance framework is anchored in the Data Protection Act of 2019, which is the country's first comprehensive

privacy law, designed to regulate the collection, processing, storage and transfer of personal data.⁵⁹ The law was enacted to give effect to Article 31 of the Constitution of Kenya, which guarantees that every person has the right not to have the privacy of their communications infringed on.⁶⁰ The regulator under this Act, the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner (ODPC), has issued several practice guidelines, including the Guidance Note on Registration of Data Controllers and Data Processors, the Guidance Note on Data Protection Impact Assessments and a Data Sharing Code, which provides a framework for responsible and ethical data sharing practices. The Act's provision on automated decision-making is most relevant to the widespread application of automated systems, including AI, to make decisions that significantly affect individuals, such as determining credit scores, public insurance premiums, and eligibility for public services. Under these provisions, individuals retain the right to request human review of automated decisions made about

⁵⁸AI Bill (Senate Bills No 4 of 2026) <https://new.kenyalaw.org/akn/ke/bill/senate/2026-02-19/the-artificial-intelligence-bill-2026/eng%402026-02-19>

⁵⁹Data Protection Act, section 3

⁶⁰Constitution of Kenya, Article 31 (d)

them,⁶¹ placing an important check on purely algorithmic determinations and establishing a foundational accountability mechanism relevant to AI deployment in Kenya.

Building on this statutory base, and anticipated to be the more distinctive anchor of data governance, the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy has developed a draft National Data Governance Policy, which sets out a unified framework for governing data as a national asset and addresses data security, ethics, interoperability and data sharing across the public and private sectors.⁶² The drafting process was launched at an inception forum in September 2025 with consultations that have included surveys, town hall meetings, key informant interviews and regional engagements.⁶³ The draft was published for public comment, with submissions invited until 5 June 2026, and is intended to be finalised and submitted for Cabinet approval thereafter.⁶⁴ The draft policy addresses the data layer on which AI systems depend, including interoperability between previously siloed government datasets and the terms on which data is shared and reused.

As a precursor to discussing ecosystem readiness, digital infrastructure in Kenya is considered, noting its direct link to understanding the ecosystem, particularly as observed under the AI strategy. Digital infrastructure in Kenya is therefore characterised by widespread mobile penetration and growing internet connectivity, though significant disparities persist between

rural and urban areas in terms of access, affordability, and quality of service. According to a 2025 Communications Authority report, 53.7% of Kenyans aged three years and above own a mobile phone, with usage standing higher at 64.9% nationally.⁶⁵ Urban areas lead in mobile ownership at 64.6% compared to 48.6% in rural areas, while internet usage stands at 35% nationally, with Nairobi at 64.7% at the top and West Pokot at just 9.1% at the bottom, illustrating the depth of the digital divide.⁶⁶ Youth aged 18–34 are the most digitally active, with over 80% owning a mobile phone and 58.6% using the internet. Computer and smart technology uptake remain low, with only 11.6% of Kenyans using computers, and smart home technology adoption largely confined to high-income urban households. The report underscores that higher ICT adoption is strongly linked to income, education, and access to reliable electricity, and that persons with disabilities, the elderly, and those with limited schooling face the greatest digital exclusion, gaps that any meaningful AI deployment strategy must actively account for.

Linking the same to ecosystem readiness, the National AI Strategy 2025-2030 treats digital infrastructure as the first of its three foundational pillars, identifying reliable connectivity, affordable devices, data centre and cloud capacity, and access to computing power as prerequisites for AI development, and linking these to the country's wider digital public infrastructure programme.⁶⁷ The Strategy also addresses the data and human capital dimensions of readiness, noting the need for high-quality, representative and locally relevant datasets, the development of AI research and innovation capacity across universities and industry, and targeted skills development to

⁶¹Data Protection Act, section 35 (3)

⁶² Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy, 'Draft National Data Governance Policy' (MICDE, May 2026) <<https://ict.go.ke/sites/default/files/2026-05/Draft%20Final%20National%20Data%20Governance%20Policy%20May%2025%202026.pdf>> accessed 23 July 2026.

⁶³ Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy, 'National Data Governance Policy Formulation Kicks Off' (MICDE, 10 September 2025) <<https://ict.go.ke/national-data-governance-policy-formulation-kicks>> accessed 23 July 2026.

⁶⁴ Kenya ICT Action Network, 'Have Your Say: Kenya's Draft National Data Governance Policy - Comments Due 5 June 2026' (KICTANet, 2026) <<https://posts.kictanet.or.ke/have-your-say-kenyas-draft-national-data-governance-policy-comments-due-5-june-2026/>> accessed 23 July 2026.

⁶⁵ Communications Authority, 'Urban-Rural Digital Divide Hinders ICT Uptake, Joint ca and KNBS Survey Shows.' Communications Authority of Kenya' (Ca.go.ke2025) <<https://www.ca.go.ke/urban-rural-digital-divide-hinders-ict-uptake-joint-ca-and-knbs-survey-shows>>.

⁶⁶ibid

⁶⁷ Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy, 'Kenya Artificial Intelligence Strategy 2025-2030' (MICDE 2025) 22-30.

build a specialised AI workforce alongside broader digital literacy.⁶⁸ Read together with the connectivity and device-access figures set out above, these commitments indicate that Kenya's readiness position rests less on the absence of a strategic framework than on the pace at which the infrastructure, data and skills components of that framework are resourced and implemented.

3.1.4 Outlook and Conclusions

Assessed across the three parameters, the developments highlighted Kenya's AI policy landscape as moving from a broad strategic direction towards the gradual development of implementation and coordination arrangements. The National AI Strategy 2025–2030 currently provides the principal statement of national priorities, while the draft National AI and Emerging Technologies Policy appear intended to elaborate the governance structures and policy principles through which those priorities may be pursued. The establishment of the Standing Cabinet Committee on Artificial Intelligence similarly indicates growing attention to coordination and oversight at the national level.

The emerging trajectory also reflects continued shaping of the policy landscape, with the ecosystem evolving, and notes that data governance and ecosystem readiness visibly shape policy direction. The draft National Data Governance Policy, together with the data and infrastructure pillars of the National AI Strategy, indicates attention to data sharing, interoperability, local datasets, connectivity, computing capacity, skills and digital inclusion. Overall, the observable trajectory is towards a layered AI governance landscape in which strategy implementation and policy development will continue to progress concurrently.

⁶⁸Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy, 'Kenya Artificial Intelligence Strategy 2025-2030' (MICDE 2025) 40-45.

3.2 Rwanda

3.2.1 National AI Vision and Strategic Direction

Rwanda's AI Framework is anchored in the National AI Policy, which aims to leverage AI to power economic growth, improve quality of life and position Rwanda as a global innovator for responsible and inclusive AI.⁶⁹ Rwanda's AI ambitions are noted within its national aspiration to become the most advanced AI-powered society in Africa, resting on three pillars: AI-enabled development across health, education and agriculture; skills and workforce development; and the emergence of Rwanda as an exporter of AI expertise supported by a thriving innovation ecosystem.⁷⁰ It details 14 key policy recommendations, which aim to promote the use of AI in Rwanda to boost Rwanda's position as an emerging AI ecosystem.⁷¹ The framework identifies key sectors of focus for AI development, which include: Healthcare, Banking and digital payments, E-Commerce and trade, Transportation, Agriculture, Public administration and education, manufacturing and construction.⁷² This multisectoral approach seeks to implement AI adoption, which can yield significant rewards, and the policy outlines the key actors, opportunities, and recommendations for each sector.

The policy also identifies 6 priority areas to focus on the responsible development of AI across Rwanda, which include; improve the accessibility to access to scalable storage and high performance computing infrastructure, to increase the number and skills of AI talent, to prepare the workforce for changing skills demands, to increase availability and access to quality data for training AI models, to accelerate AI adoption in the public sector to

⁶⁹Ministry of ICT and Innovation, The National AI Policy (Republic of Rwanda 2022). <https://www.africadataprotection.org/sources/Artificial-Intelligence-Policy.pdf>

⁷⁰Ibid

⁷¹Ministry of ICT and Innovation, The National AI Policy (Republic of Rwanda 2022). <https://www.africadataprotection.org/sources/Artificial-Intelligence-Policy.pdf>

⁷²Ibid 3



The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda 2003 (revised in 2015) guarantees equality before the law and respect for the privacy of a person and of the family, rights that remain binding as AI systems are developed and deployed and that sit alongside the responsible-AI orientation of the National AI Policy.

improve public services, to scale AI adoption throughout the economy to boost productivity and efficiency and to mitigate the risks presented by AI and promote its responsible and trustworthy adoption.⁷³ These priority areas seek to guide the implementation of AI in Rwanda. Additionally, the policy framework details an implementation plan for each priority area, with implementation milestones spanning 2023 to 2028 and the responsible institutions. The responsibility of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the policy, its integration in regional-level policies and leading communications around the National Policy has been placed on the Responsible AI Office, and this responsibility is further expounded on in the implementation plan summary.⁷⁴

Rwanda's strategic direction rests on a constitutional foundation that applies to AI-related conduct. The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda 2003 (revised in 2015)

guarantees equality before the law and respect for the privacy of a person and of the family, rights that remain binding as AI systems are developed and deployed and that sit alongside the responsible-AI orientation of the National AI Policy.⁷⁵

3.2.2 Legal, Regulatory and Institutional Architecture

Rwanda's foundational legal instrument for data-related conduct is Law No 058/2021 of 13 October 2021 relating to the protection of personal data and privacy, gazetted on 15 October 2021, which is the country's first dedicated data protection statute.⁷⁶ The law applies to data controllers and processors handling the personal data of persons in Rwanda, including entities established outside the country, and it establishes obligations on lawful, fair and transparent processing, consent,

⁷³ Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda 2003 (revised in 2015), arts 15 (equality before the law) and 23 (respect for privacy of a person and of the family).

⁷⁶ Law No 058/2021 of 13/10/2021 relating to the protection of personal data and privacy, Official Gazette No Special of 15/10/2021 (Rwanda).

⁷³ibid

⁷⁴ibid page 6- 7

and the rights of data subjects. Organisations already operating when the law commenced were given a transitional period of two years, to 15 October 2023, to bring their processing into conformity. Supervision and enforcement sit with the National Cyber Security Authority, with which data controllers and processors are required to register, and the law also imposes conditions on the storage of personal data outside Rwanda, which may be undertaken only with authorisation from the Authority.⁷⁷ These provisions are directly relevant to AI systems, since the training and deployment of such systems ordinarily involves the processing of personal data and, where data is hosted abroad, engages the localisation and authorisation requirements.

Alongside the data protection statute, Law No 24/2016 of 18 June 2016 governing information and communication technologies provides the broader regulatory foundation for the ICT sector within which AI development takes place, addressing electronic communications, service provision and related regulatory functions.⁷⁸ Together with the Constitution and the data protection law, these instruments form the general legal framework that applies to AI-related conduct in the absence of dedicated AI legislation, and the National AI Policy is positioned to operate alongside rather than in place of them.

Rwanda also has an AI Readiness and Maturity framework for Rwanda, which seeks to visualise the current levels of AI readiness of Rwanda, as well as progress over time.⁷⁹ This framework seeks to inform policy interventions and investment decisions for both the government

and private actors. It includes indicators related to the six priority areas detailed in the National AI Policy, a comprehensive and tailor-made data portfolio and a dynamic dashboard.⁸⁰ The datasets to be used in the implementation and adoption of AI are mainly from national data producers and third-party data providers.⁸¹ The framework notes that Rwanda is currently facing limitations in its workforce size and in the human capital dedicated to AI. However, in recent years, Rwanda has shown a marked upward trend over time.⁸² The main recommendations include; better defining the aspirations, focus areas, opportunities, activities and outcomes for data stewards and data custodians in AI, further capacity building to establish data governance mechanisms and draw strategic insights for policy makers using the dashboard, developing and including additional data sources to enrich the dashboard with further indicators, increasing AI awareness and AI culture within the public sector and establishing a true partnership between the government and private sector.⁸³

3.2.3 Data Governance and Ecosystem Readiness

Rwanda has strengthened the data-governance foundations on which its AI ecosystem depends, complemented by the instruments identified in the legal, regulatory and institutional architecture. In May 2025, the Cabinet approved the National Data Sharing Policy, developed by the Ministry of ICT and Innovation together with the Rwanda Information Society Authority (RISA), to establish a secure, governed framework for the exchange of data across public institutions, with a stated intention to extend the framework to private-sector actors.⁸⁴ The policy formalises data

⁷⁷ National Cyber Security Authority (Rwanda), 'Data Protection and Privacy' <<https://www.risa.gov.rw/data-protection-and-privacy-law>> accessed 23 July 2026.

⁷⁸ Law No 24/2016 of 18/06/2016 governing information and communication technologies (Rwanda).

⁷⁹ Ministry of ICT and innovation (Rwanda), *AI Readiness and Maturity framework for Rwanda* (Government of Rwanda, October 2022) <https://www.minict.gov.rw/fileadmin/user_upload/minict_user_upload/Documents/Policies/AI_Readiness_and_Maturity_Framework_for_Rwanda.pdf>- accessed 10 April 2026.

⁸⁰ Ibid

⁸¹ Ibid

⁸² Ibid 24

⁸³ Ibid

⁸⁴ Ministry of ICT and Innovation (Rwanda) and Rwanda Information Society Authority (RISA), The National Data Sharing Policy (Republic of Rwanda, May 2025) <https://www.risa.gov.rw/news-detail/nation-al-data-sharing-policy-approved> accessed 2 July 2026.

sharing through legally binding data-sharing agreements between participating institutions, thereby dismantling data silos while building accountability and public trust, and it operates in compliance with Rwanda's data protection law. For AI governance, this matters because the availability of accessible, well-governed and interoperable data is a precondition for training and deploying locally relevant models, a concern the National AI Policy itself identifies as central to Rwanda's position as an AI hub.⁸⁵

The National Data Sharing Policy is framed with reference to the data protection statute and expressly addresses the uncertainty that had arisen regarding whether institutions could share data in a manner consistent with that law. It distinguishes personal data, which remains governed by the data protection regime, from the broader category of data processed by government agencies, and it sets out principles and governance arrangements intended to enable data sharing between agencies while preserving statutory safeguards.⁸⁶ For AI development, this matters because fragmented and non-interoperable public datasets are a recurring constraint on model development, and a shared governance framework is a precondition for using such data at scale.

On ecosystem readiness, the AI Readiness and Maturity Framework provides Rwanda's principal self-assessment instrument, using indicators aligned to the priority areas of the National AI Policy to track readiness over time and to inform policy and investment decisions across government and the private sector.⁸⁷ Because the framework is designed

for periodic reapplication, it provides a mechanism to monitor whether institutional and infrastructural capacity is developing in step with policy commitments, rather than treating readiness as a fixed assessment.

In a bid to increase and scale up the use of AI technologies in Rwanda, the Ministry of ICT and Innovation of Rwanda signed an MoU with the Gates Foundation, and this will see the actualisation of the Rwanda AI Scaling Hub, which will ensure that AI Technologies will be deployed in an ethical, sustainable and inclusive manner.⁸⁸ The hub had several flagship projects, specifically within the sectors of Healthcare, Agriculture and Education, which ensure that there is inclusive implementation of AI Technologies in rural and underserved communities, and strengthen Rwanda's position in policy leadership in ethical AI, and as a continental leader in AI Innovation.⁸⁹

3.2.4 Outlook and Conclusions

Rwanda's position, as assessed across the three parameters, is characterised by an emphasis on institutional and data governance foundations. Its national AI vision is expressed through an adopted National AI Policy with defined priority sectors; its legal architecture rests on the constitution, a dedicated data protection statute and the ICT law; its data governance arrangements pair that statute with a National Data Sharing Policy addressing inter-agency data use; and implementation is pursued through a dedicated office and a portfolio of deployed use cases. As findings, two points are relevant. Rwanda has established a dedicated institutional locus for responsible AI, which is not replicated in the same form elsewhere in the group, and it has addressed the inter-agency data-sharing question through

⁸⁵ *ibid*; see also 'Rwanda Charts a New Course for Government Data Sharing' (IAPP, 18 June 2025) <https://iapp.org/news/a/rwanda-charts-a-new-course-for-government-data-sharing> accessed 2 July 2026.

⁸⁶ Ministry of ICT and Innovation (Rwanda), 'The National Data Sharing Policy' (Government of Rwanda, May 2025) <<https://www.minict.gov.rw>> accessed 23 July 2026.

⁸⁷ Ministry of ICT and Innovation (Rwanda), 'AI Readiness and Maturity Framework for Rwanda' (Government of Rwanda, October 2022). <https://www.minict.gov.rw/fileadmin/user_upload/minict_user_upload/Documents/Policies/AI_Readiness_and_Maturity_Framework_for_Rwanda.pdf>

⁸⁸ Rwanda Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, 'New Rwanda AI Scaling Hub announced at Global AI Summit of Africa' (4 April 2025) <<https://c4ir.rw/global-ai-summit-on-africa/news/New-Rwanda-AI-Scaling-Hub-Announced-at-Global-AI-Summit-on-Africa>> Accessed 15 April 2026.

⁸⁹ Innovate Rwanda, 'Rwanda launches FinTech Centre, Innovation platform to strengthen startup ecosystem' (12 March 2026) <<https://innovaterwanda.rw/en/news/18>> accessed 19 April 2026.

a specific policy instrument. At the same time, no dedicated AI statute has been enacted, and published results tracking movement across successive readiness assessment cycles were not identified in the sources reviewed. The framework is therefore institutionally articulated, with the extent of operational effect not yet evidenced in the public record.

3.3 Tanzania

3.3.1 National AI Vision and Strategic Direction

Tanzania's vision and strategic direction is characterised by an emerging approach, with foundational elements for responsible AI deployment integrated into broader digital and innovation policies. A distinctive feature of Tanzania's approach is its framing of AI around national sovereignty, understood along three dimensions: technology sovereignty, data sovereignty and values sovereignty.⁹⁰ This framing is drawn from the country's long-term Development Vision 2050 (Dira 2050) and the principle of self-reliance as a national bedrock.⁹¹ Aligned with this trajectory, Tanzania has made a deliberate decision to begin with guidelines as AI adoption and use is still at an early stage, while emphasising multi-stakeholder consultation and genuine public participation before any policy instrument is advanced. Its digital transformation is anchored in the National Digital Economy Strategic Framework 2024–2034, structured around a three-stage journey from digital infrastructure to digital economy and, ultimately, a digital society.⁹² More specific to the AI ecosystem is the development of the National Guidelines for Artificial Intelligence in Education and the Policy Framework for Artificial Intelligence in Tanzania Health Sector.

⁹⁰United Republic of Tanzania, National Development Vision 2050 (Dira 2050) (Government of the United Republic of Tanzania 2025)

⁹¹ *ibid*

⁹²United Republic of Tanzania, Tanzania Digital Economy Strategic Framework 2024–2034 (Government of the United Republic of Tanzania 2024).

Notably, Tanzania completed its National AI Readiness Assessment, a consultative and evidence-based analysis aimed at informing a forthcoming National AI Strategy.⁹³ The assessment process was supported by UNESCO and engaged stakeholders across government, academia, civil society, and the private sector.⁹⁴ The Readiness Assessment Report⁹⁵ emphasises ethical AI adoption aligned with human rights, transparency, fairness, privacy, inclusivity, and sustainable development, principles deriving from the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence adopted by Member States.⁹⁶ The draft National AI Strategy is being developed under the guidance of the Ministry of Information, Communication and Technology, with intentions to develop governance frameworks that facilitate equitable AI diffusion across sectors such as healthcare, agriculture, finance, and education.⁹⁷

3.3.2 Legal, Regulatory and Institutional Architecture

Foundational laws equally frame the legal, regulatory and institutional architecture of Tanzania. The Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA), 2022, which came into force on 1 May 2023, establishes Tanzania's legal and regulatory foundation with respect to AI.⁹⁸ The PDPA establishes principles for the collection, processing, storage, and dissemination of personal data and creates the Personal Data Protection Commission (PDPC) to supervise

⁹³UNESCO, 'UNESCO supports Consultations for AI Readiness Assessment in Tanzania' (UNESCO, 21 March 2025) <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unesco-supports-consultations-ai-readiness-assessment-tanzania> accessed 12 Feb 2026

⁹⁴*ibid*

⁹⁵*The United Republic of Tanzania National Artificial Intelligence Readiness Report* (United Nations 2025) <https://tanzania.un.org/sites/default/files/2025-07/National%20AI%20Readiness%20Report.pdf> accessed 12 Feb 2026

⁹⁶*ibid*

⁹⁷ *ibid*

⁹⁸ *The Personal Data Protection Act* (United Republic of Tanzania) GN No 395B of 13 June 2023 (English version, published pursuant to section 84(4) of the Interpretation of Laws Act, Ch 1) Cap 44, Act No 11 of 2022 https://www.pdpc.go.tz/media/media/THE_PERSONAL_DATA_PROTECTION_ACT.pdf accessed 12 Feb 2026

compliance.⁹⁹ It applies broadly across manual and automated data processing, which implicitly covers many AI systems that rely on personal data.¹⁰⁰

Key principles under Section 5 include legality, fairness, transparency, purpose limitation, accuracy, data minimisation, and storage limitation. Crucially for AI governance, the PDPA requires that data processing be transparent and subject to appropriate security measures and safeguards against unlawful or unauthorised processing, including automated decision-making processes.¹⁰¹ Mandates relevant to AI-related conduct are additionally distributed across other regulatory bodies, including the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority, which bears on how enforcement responsibilities are allocated in practice.¹⁰²

Other cross-cutting foundational laws include the Cybercrimes Act 2023, which provides a critical structure for protecting AI systems from malicious attacks like data poisoning or unauthorised access.¹⁰³ Additionally, the Public Procurement Act 2023¹⁰⁴ may be leveraged to ensure accountability and value for money in the public acquisition of AI, and the Access to Information Act 2016¹⁰⁵ Currently limited to the mainland, theoretically can be leveraged to enable democratic oversight by allowing citizens to request information on the data and algorithms used by government agencies.

Tanzania's landscape is further characterised by sectoral guidelines and policies in place.

For instance, Tanzania has articulated a policy framework for AI in its health sector to guide integration of AI into healthcare service delivery and data management. Similarly, the Ministry of Education put out national sector guidelines on AI applications in education.¹⁰⁶

The education guidelines sit within the National Digital Education Strategy 2024/25-2029/30 and draw on the National ICT Policy and the Education and Training Policy of 2014 as revised in 2023. They apply across basic education, technical and vocational education and training, and higher education, and address responsible and ethical use, transparency, data protection, and learner wellbeing, while assigning implementation roles to the Ministry's departments, regulatory institutions, and individual educational institutions. A notable operational feature is the requirement that each educational institution develop its own institutional framework for AI use, addressing privacy, security, ethics and student wellbeing, and subject to periodic review. This devolves a measure of governance responsibility to the institutional level while retaining ministerial oversight.

3.3.3 Data Governance and Ecosystem Readiness

Tanzania's approach to data governance and ecosystem readiness is reflected in efforts to develop the linguistic, digital and physical resources required for locally relevant AI development.¹⁰⁷ A notable component of this emerging ecosystem is the development of Kiswahili language data and associated

⁹⁹ *ibid*

¹⁰⁰ *ibid*

¹⁰¹ *ibid*

¹⁰² *ibid*

¹⁰³ The Cyber Crimes Act [CAP. 443 R.E. 2023] <https://www.nps.go.tz/uploads/documents/sw-1751202044-The%20Cybercrimes%20Act.pdf>

¹⁰⁴ The Public Procurement Act 2023 (10 of 2023) <https://www.ppra.go.tz/uploads/documents/en-1736861173-THE%20PUBLIC%20PROCUREMENT%20ACT.pdf>

¹⁰⁵ Access to Information Act 2016 <<https://www.mawasiliano.go.tz/uploads/documents/sw-1687500936-THE%20ACCESS%20TO%20INFORMATION%20ACT,%202016.pdf>>

¹⁰⁶ National Guidelines on Artificial Intelligence on Education <https://www.moe.go.tz/sites/default/files/NATIONAL%20GUIDELINES%20FOR%20ARTIFICIAL%20INTELLIGENCE%20N%20EDUCATION.pdf>; please note that while these guidelines have originally been available through the linked site in the course of the development of this report, as noted with the limitation to desk review in the methodology, the guideline at the time of publishing is no longer available online.

¹⁰⁷ UNESCO, 'Artificial Intelligence Readiness Assessment Report: Tanzania' (UNESCO, 2025) <https://tanzania.un.org/sites/default/files/2025-07/National%20AI%20Readiness%20Report.pdf> accessed 2 July 2026



Tanzania's approach to data governance and ecosystem readiness is reflected in efforts to develop the linguistic, digital and physical resources required for locally relevant AI development.

language technologies.¹⁰⁸ On the linguistic front, the National Kiswahili Council (BAKITA) serves as a vital institutional partner in fostering linguistic inclusivity and preserving Tanzania's cultural heritage within the digital landscape.¹⁰⁹ In collaboration with academic hubs like the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), these efforts focus on developing the large-scale, high-quality, annotated datasets required to transition Kiswahili from a low-resource language to a foundational pillar for local AI innovation.¹¹⁰ By prioritising culturally contextualised Natural Language Processing (NLP), this partnership, complemented by initiatives such as the Database Kiswahili project and The Lacuna Fund, aims to build the essential linguistic resources needed to ensure that AI technologies are both accessible to the majority of the population and deeply attuned to Tanzanian values.¹¹¹ Although Tanzania is home to more than 120 ethnic languages, it has strategically focused AI development

on Kiswahili, the national unifying language, while undertaking preservation work on other languages to enrich the national corpus. This positions Tanzania as a potential regional anchor for standardised Kiswahili language data, subject to persistent challenges of limited training data, the absence of Kiswahili-aware search tools and the management of dialectal variation.

Tanzania's AI ecosystem readiness is reflected in the interaction between its research institutions, innovation networks, digital infrastructure and emerging language-data initiatives. Academic institutions such as the University of Dar es Salaam, the University of Dodoma and the Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology contribute to domestic research, technical training and innovation. The AfriAI Lab, operated collaboratively by UDOM and NM-AIST, supports multidisciplinary research and capacity development in responsible AI, including applications in healthcare, agriculture, environmental conservation, infrastructure

¹⁰⁸ *ibid*

¹⁰⁹ *ibid*

¹¹⁰ *ibid*

¹¹¹ *ibid*

and the digital economy. These institutions provide part of the knowledge and skills base required to support sectoral adoption and the implementation of future national AI policies. Additionally, adoption in practice is concentrated in agriculture, health and financial services. In agriculture, locally developed computer-vision tools support smallholder farmers with early detection of crop disease, with one such application reported to have reached approximately 63,000 farmers in the Southern Highlands and northern regions as of August 2025 and to be extending its disease models to further crops.¹¹² In financial services, adoption has centred on mobile-money fraud detection, alternative credit scoring using transaction data, and Kiswahili-capable customer service tools, reflecting the country's high mobile-money penetration. In health, AI applications have focused on diagnostic support and service delivery, consistent with the sectoral policy framework noted above. National readiness assessment work applying the UNESCO Readiness Assessment Methodology has recorded comparatively stronger scores on infrastructure and data than on technical skills and institutional capacity, indicating that the principal constraints on sectoral scale-up relate to specialised capability and coordination rather than to the availability of use cases.¹¹³ Because adoption is advancing ahead of a consolidated national AI instrument, sectoral practice is likely to shape the policy questions that any future framework will need to address, particularly in relation to data quality, language coverage and accountability for automated decisions.

3.3.4 Outlook and Conclusions

Assessed across the three parameters,

¹¹²S Mduma and others, 'KilimoAI: AI-enabled crop disease detection for smallholder farmers' (Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology); see also 'AI Promises Cleaner Farming in Tanzania' (Sentient Media, 27 March 2026) <https://sentientmedia.org/ai-promises-cleaner-farming-in-tanzania/> accessed 23 July 2026.

¹¹³United Republic of Tanzania, National AI Readiness Assessment (applying the UNESCO Readiness Assessment Methodology), findings presented at the Africa Internet Governance Forum, 2025.

Tanzania's position is characterised by a policy direction articulated through readiness assessment and sectoral guidance. Its national AI vision continues to take shape through the national AI strategy-development process, while its legal architecture rests on constitutional provisions and the Personal Data Protection Act 2022, which imposes binding obligations on the processing of personal data. Its data governance and ecosystem readiness are further reflected in the development of digital infrastructure, research and innovation capacity, and Kiswahili language resources. Observable AI activity in agriculture, health and financial services, together with sector-specific policy instruments in health and education, provides early indications of how national policy objectives are being translated into sectoral experimentation and guidance. Research institutions, innovation communities and emerging data infrastructure also provide part of the institutional and technical capacity through which these applications may be developed and governed. Taken together, these developments point to a trajectory in which national strategy development is occurring alongside sectoral adoption and wider digital-economy planning.

3.4 Uganda

3.4.1 National AI Vision and Strategic Direction

Uganda's National AI vision and strategic direction is also characterised by digital and innovation policies and national development plans, noting that its National AI Strategy is under development. The **National Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Policy**, last updated in 2009, establishes the overarching framework for scientific and technological advancement in Uganda.¹¹⁴ Although it predates recent developments in AI, its

¹¹⁴Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, *National Science, Technology and Innovation Policy* < <https://uncst.go.ug/files/downloads/National%20STI%20Policy%202009.pdf> > accessed 13 April 2026

provisions remain relevant to AI research and development, particularly in relation to human capital and technological growth.¹¹⁵ The policy underscores the importance of strengthening science, engineering and technical skills in the education system to build the capacity necessary for innovation, which is relevant to emerging fields such as AI.¹¹⁶ It also emphasises technology transfer, acquisition, and development, which can be interpreted as encompassing AI technologies, even though these are not referenced.¹¹⁷

The **Uganda Vision 2040** serves as a key policy framework aimed at transforming Uganda into an upper-middle-income country by 2040.¹¹⁸ It adopts a comprehensive approach to development, prioritising areas such as infrastructure, human capital, and governance.¹¹⁹ The Vision highlights the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering and Innovation (STEI) as key drivers of economic growth and social transformation.¹²⁰ Within this context, the uptake of advanced technologies, including artificial intelligence, is implicitly recognised as important for achieving sustainable development and improving the quality of life, despite the absence of any reference to AI.¹²¹

Moreover, the **National Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) Strategy (2020)** sets a long-term vision to establish Uganda as a leading African hub for 4IR technologies by 2040.¹²² It sets out the country's approach to leveraging emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, to address development challenges and stimulate economic growth.¹²³ The Strategy highlights the application of AI within the public

sector, particularly in enhancing financial management and strengthening tax revenue collection by the Uganda Revenue Authority.¹²⁴

Additionally, Uganda's **Fourth National Development Plan (NDP IV)**, covering the period from 2025/26 to 2029/30, establishes a comprehensive strategic framework that positions Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) as foundational elements of the nation's Digital Transformation and Innovation programs.¹²⁵ By identifying AI and cloud computing as essential, scalable, and cost-effective infrastructure tools, the plan seeks to enhance the competitiveness and efficiency of both government operations and private business enterprises.¹²⁶ A central pillar of this framework is the strengthening of legal and regulatory enforcement within the digital ecosystem, specifically targeting the mitigation of cybersecurity risks and the resolution of inadequate data protection measures, both of which are viewed as foundational prerequisites for the safe and ethical deployment of AI.¹²⁷

Uganda's strategic direction is further being set through an Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technologies Strategy, which the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance is developing to guide the adoption and governance of AI alongside related technologies such as blockchain, the Internet of Things and robotics. The Ministry has indicated that the Strategy is intended to be accompanied by policy and regulatory measures addressing ethical and secure deployment, and to emphasise the development of local AI and machine-learning skills with a focus on youth employment.¹²⁸ Coordination of this work is

¹¹⁵ Ibid Section 1.2

¹¹⁶ Ibid Section 1.2.1.2

¹¹⁷ Ibid Section 4.2

¹¹⁸ National Planning Authority, *Uganda Vision 2040* <<https://npa.go.ug/uganda-vision-2040/>> accessed 13 April 2026

¹¹⁹ Ibid

¹²⁰ Ibid 16

¹²¹ CIPESA (n 21)

¹²² Ministry of ICT and National Guidance, *Uganda's National 4IR Strategy* <<https://ict.go.ug/site/documents/Executive-Summary-Uganda-National-4IR-Strategy.pdf>> accessed 13 April 2026

¹²³ Ibid

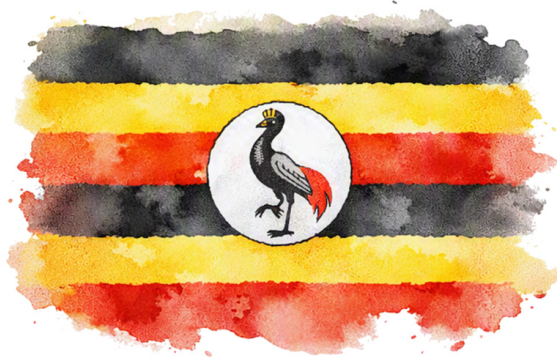
¹²⁴ Ibid 12

¹²⁵ Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, *Fourth National Development Plan (NDP IV) 2025/26-2029/30* <<https://create.finance.go.ug/publicationsresources/fourth-national-development-plan-ndpiv>> accessed 13 April 2026

¹²⁶ Ibid 175

¹²⁷ Ibid 300

¹²⁸ Ministry of ICT and National Guidance (Uganda), statements on the development of the Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technologies Strategy; see 'Govt AI strategy will be ready by June, says ICT ministry' (Daily Monitor, 1 April 2026) <<https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/news/national/govt-ai-strategy-will-be-ready-by-june-says-ict-ministry-5410430>> accessed 23 July 2026.



Uganda's consumer protection framework, particularly the Uganda National Bureau of Standards Act, 2013, is also relevant to AI governance, as it provides a basis for ensuring the safety and quality of AI-powered products and services.

supported by an eleven-member National AI Task Force drawn from government, academia and technical institutions, established to guide strategy development and to provide an institutional anchor for policy coherence and technical oversight.¹²⁹

Running alongside the strategy process, Uganda is applying the UNESCO Readiness Assessment Methodology, which supports states in evaluating institutional capacity, data systems, governance structures, and societal readiness before large-scale AI adoption, and which gives effect to the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence adopted in 2021. A national consultative workshop launching the process was held in Kampala in February 2026, convening government, academia, the private sector, civil society, youth innovators

and development partners.¹³⁰ A national stakeholders consultation to validate the readiness findings and to consider a roadmap for AI governance followed in May 2026, convened by the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance with UNESCO's Regional Office for Eastern Africa.¹³¹ The readiness process is therefore proceeding in parallel with, rather than after, the drafting of the Strategy, which positions the assessment findings to inform the Strategy as it is finalised.

Preparatory analysis has also been undertaken through a national AI landscape assessment prepared by the Ministry with the International Telecommunication Union, which surveyed institutional awareness and use of AI across Uganda's digital ecosystem. That assessment reported that a substantial majority of

¹²⁹ UNESCO, 'Building Blocks for an Ethical and Responsible AI Governance in Uganda' (UNESCO, 19 February 2026) <<https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/building-blocks-ethical-and-responsible-ai-governance-uganda-balancing-innovation-rights-and>> accessed 23 July 2026.

¹³⁰ UNESCO, 'Building Blocks for an Ethical and Responsible AI Governance in Uganda' (UNESCO, 19 February 2026) <<https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/building-blocks-ethical-and-responsible-ai-governance-uganda-balancing-innovation-rights-and>> accessed 23 July 2026.

¹³¹ UNESCO, 'Uganda Convenes National Stakeholders Dialogue to Strengthen Ethical AI Governance' (UNESCO, 26 May 2026) <of in collaboration <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/uganda-convenes-national-stakeholders-dialogue-strengthen-ethical-ai-governance>> accessed 23 July 2026.

institutions surveyed were not aware of any national AI policy and identified the absence of such an instrument as a gap affecting consistent and responsible AI use across public and private organisations.¹³² These findings form part of the evidence base on which the Strategy and the accompanying governance arrangements are being developed.

3.4.2 Legal, Regulatory and Institutional Architecture

The Data Protection and Privacy Act 2019 anchors the legal and regulatory architecture, functioning as a foundational law as it regulates the collection and processing of personal data, which is central to many AI systems. It requires data to be processed lawfully, fairly, and with consent, while granting individuals rights such as access, correction, rights in relation to automated decision-taking and deletion of their data.¹³³ The Act also sets out key principles such as accountability, minimality, accuracy, and storage limitation, which provide a strong foundation for responsible and rights-respecting AI development and use.¹³⁴ Institutionally, administration and enforcement sit with the Personal Data Protection Office, established within the National Information Technology Authority, which maintains the register of data collectors, controllers and processors and handles complaints.¹³⁵ Because Uganda has not yet adopted a dedicated AI instrument, this framework carries much of the regulatory weight for AI-related data processing, and the extent to which its automated decision-taking provisions are interpreted and enforced in AI contexts will materially shape the governance environment.

Complementing the legal and regulatory architecture is the **Computer Misuse Act of 2011**, as it provides a legal basis for addressing the misuse of digital technologies. It criminalises unauthorised access to computer systems,¹³⁶ which is particularly applicable to AI-enabled cyberattacks or system intrusions, and prohibits the unauthorised modification of data, including by automated systems. These provisions highlight the need to adopt strong cybersecurity measures to ensure that AI systems are used securely, lawfully, and ethically.

The **National Payment Systems Act of 2020** is another relevant law, as it governs the safety, efficiency, and reliability of payment systems in Uganda.¹³⁷ Section 18 provides for the creation of regulatory sandboxes, primarily managed by the Bank of Uganda, in which new technologies, including AI, can be tested in a controlled environment before deployment. These sandboxes support innovation by allowing systems to be refined and assessed for effectiveness.¹³⁸ However, the Act does not set out detailed guidelines to ensure that AI technologies are rigorously evaluated for public safety prior to widespread implementation.¹³⁹

Uganda's consumer protection framework, particularly the Uganda **National Bureau of Standards Act, 2013**, is also relevant to AI governance, as it provides a basis for ensuring the safety and quality of AI-powered products and services. The Act establishes the Uganda National Bureau of Standards and mandates it to develop and enforce standards, including those related to quality control and consumer protection.¹⁴⁰ Although it does not expressly address AI, its provisions can be interpreted to apply to such technologies, particularly under

¹³² Ministry of ICT and National Guidance (Uganda) and International Telecommunication Union, Uganda National AI Landscape Assessment (ITU 2025) <<https://ict.go.ug/site/documents/uganda-national-ai-landscape-assessment.pdf>> accessed 23 July 2026.

¹³³ Section 3 and Part V

¹³⁴ Section 3

¹³⁵ National Information Technology Authority Uganda, Personal Data Protection Office <<https://www.pdpo.go.ug>> accessed 23 July 2026.

¹³⁶ Computer Misuse Act 2011, Section 12

¹³⁷ National Payment Systems Act 2020, preamble

¹³⁸ CIPESA, *An Artificial Intelligence Eco-system for Uganda; Policy Brief* <https://cipesa.org/wp-content/files/briefs/An_Artificial_Intelligence_Eco-System_for_Uganda_Policy_Brief.pdf> accessed 14 April 2026

¹³⁹ *ibid*

¹⁴⁰ Sections 2 and 3

Section 21, which prohibits the distribution of products that fail to meet compulsory standards.

3.4.3 Data Governance and Ecosystem Readiness

Uganda's data governance position is characterised by a robust statutory foundation that is transitioning toward operational maturity through the finalisation of the National Data Strategy and the Big Data Utilization Strategy (2023–2027). While the Data Protection and Privacy Act 2019 provides the necessary legal safeguards for personal data, thereby functioning as the statutory foundation, the validated National Data Strategy, in its finalisation stage, positions data as a critical national asset, providing a robust anchoring framework.¹⁴¹ The strategy focuses on three strategic pillars, namely data governance, data infrastructure, and strategic utilisation. Centrally, the strategy proposes a National Data Steering Committee and a National Data Office to dismantle existing silos and foster a culture of trust and interoperability.¹⁴²

On ecosystem readiness, Uganda's infrastructure comprises centralised national facilities and a range of sector-specific systems. While the NITA-U National Data Center provides a secure cloud environment used by 54.1% of Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), many sectors including health, education, and agriculture maintain independent, unintegrated management information systems. Furthermore, while the National Backbone Infrastructure (NBI) expansion has improved connectivity, high-speed internet remains unavailable in most rural regions, creating a geographic "digital divide" in data generation and access.

The human capital dimension of readiness

presents a dual-track reality. Uganda has successfully established academic centers of excellence, such as the Makerere University AI Lab, and introduced data science courses at undergraduate levels. Despite this, a critical mass of practitioners is missing; the Inclusive Digital Economy Scorecard (IDES) rated Uganda's digital skills domain at only 43% in 2022. Uganda's current ecosystem readiness reflects an emerging policy direction alongside continuing efforts to strengthen technical skills and integrate digital infrastructure. Its data governance position is shaped by the existing data-protection framework, the development of public-sector data systems, and the availability of technical capacity to support AI development and deployment.

Additionally, the national AI landscape assessment prepared with the International Telecommunication Union identified constraints that bear directly on the data and infrastructure layer, including limited institutional awareness of national AI policy direction, fragmentation of data across ministries and agencies, and shortages of specialised technical skills.¹⁴³ Data held by public institutions is frequently maintained in separate systems without common standards, which limits the assembly of the representative national datasets on which locally relevant AI models depend. Institutional research capacity forms a significant part of this picture. The Artificial Intelligence Health Lab at Makerere University was launched in May 2024 by the Government of Uganda in collaboration with the university, with the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance officiating, and is directed at applying AI to diagnostic and healthcare delivery challenges.¹⁴⁴ Work at the lab includes point-of-care microscopy tools for malaria,

¹⁴¹Ministry of ICT and National Guidance, *MolICT&NG Newsletter 2025Q2* (2025) https://ict.go.ug/site/documents/MolICT&NG_Newsletter_2025Q2.pdf accessed 2 July 2026

¹⁴² ITU and Ministry of ICT and National Guidance, *Assessment of the Big Data Landscape in Uganda* (2024) 17.

¹⁴³Ministry of ICT and National Guidance (Uganda) and International Telecommunication Union, *Uganda National AI Landscape Assessment* (ITU 2025).

¹⁴⁴ Makerere University College of Computing and Information Sciences, 'Uganda Launches AI Health Lab at Makerere University' (Makerere University, 30 May 2024) <<https://cocis.mak.ac.ug/uganda-launches-ai-health-lab-at-makerere-university/>> accessed 23 July 2026.

tuberculosis and cervical cancer screening using smartphone-mounted microscopes, AI-assisted ultrasound screening intended to identify high-risk pregnancies, disease-surveillance models that integrate environmental variables with national health management information systems, and chatbot and translation tools developed for local languages.¹⁴⁵ Related research programmes supported through international development funding extend this work into agriculture, climate and natural language processing, including livestock disease detection and land-cover analysis for natural resource management.¹⁴⁶

3.4.4 Outlook and Conclusions

Assessed across the three parameters, Uganda's position is characterised by an emerging national AI policy direction that builds on existing science, technology, digital-transformation and development-planning instruments. Its legal and institutional architecture is anchored in existing frameworks, particularly the Data Protection and Privacy Act 2019, alongside laws governing computer misuse, payment systems, standards and consumer protection. Data governance and ecosystem readiness continue to develop through the national data strategy process, public-sector digital infrastructure, university-based research, and the ongoing UNESCO readiness assessment, with data interoperability, rural connectivity, and

specialised technical skills remaining relevant implementation considerations. Observable applications in health, agriculture and financial services provide early indications of sectoral adoption, although they do not yet establish the scale of implementation nationally. Uganda's near-term outlook will therefore be shaped by the finalisation of its AI and Emerging Technologies Strategy, the integration of readiness assessment findings and the coordination of existing legal safeguards, institutional mandates, data initiatives, and research capacity within a coherent national governance approach. Notably, as sectoral applications are emerging largely from research settings rather than at the national deployment scale, questions of clinical and agricultural data quality, consent, and local-language coverage are being worked through before they arise as regulatory matters, which leaves scope for the framework under development to be aligned with practice as it takes shape.

Drawing from the country profiles assessed across three parameters, namely national AI vision and strategic direction, legal, regulatory and institutional architecture, and data governance and ecosystem readiness, these key observations present a collective outlook of the AI policy landscape in Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. They identify common developments and differences in national policy and regulatory approaches without ranking country performance, while providing an evidence base for monitoring policy developments, informing future policy discussions and supporting national and regional AI ecosystem development.

¹⁴⁵ Makerere AI Health Lab, project descriptions covering malaria, tuberculosis and cervical cancer screening and maternal health <<https://www.makerereaihealthlab.com/>> accessed 23 July 2026.

¹⁴⁶ International Development Research Centre, 'Makerere University Artificial Intelligence for Development Research Lab' (IDRC) <<https://idrc-crdi.ca/en/what-we-do/projects-we-support/project/makerere-university-artificial-intelligence-development>> accessed 23 July 2026.

4.0

KEY

OBSERVATIONS



a. AI-specific policy direction is emerging through different national stages

Across the four countries, the AI policy landscape is developing within broader constitutional, digital transformation, science and technology, data protection, and national development frameworks. Kenya and Rwanda have adopted national AI instruments, while Tanzania and Uganda are developing national strategies alongside readiness-assessment processes. This indicates a broadly shared movement towards more explicit AI governance, although the sequence through which this is occurring differs. Kenya and Rwanda have articulated national direction through adopted strategies or policies, while Tanzania and Uganda are combining strategy development with readiness assessment, sectoral guidance, and existing digital policy instruments. These differences suggest that the region is not converging around a single pathway but is developing its AI policy landscape through nationally specific processes.

b. AI governance is presently characterised by layered legal and

policy frameworks

Constitutional protections, data-protection legislation, cybersecurity laws, consumer-protection frameworks and sectoral regulation already apply to aspects of AI development and use within their respective scopes. National AI strategies, policies, standards and guidelines complement these obligations by setting priorities and providing direction for responsible adoption. The emerging architecture is therefore layered, combining existing binding laws with newer AI-specific policy instruments. Whether additional detail is eventually expressed through legislation, technical standards, regulatory guidance or sector-specific rules remains a matter that each country is approaching according to its legal and institutional context.

c. Institutional arrangements reflect different approaches to coordination

Kenya is developing central coordination through the Standing Cabinet Committee on Artificial Intelligence and the governance structures envisaged under its national strategy, alongside the continuing roles of existing regulators and standards bodies. Rwanda's National AI Policy assigns monitoring

and coordination responsibilities to the Responsible AI Office. Tanzania's emerging approach combines oversight by data-protection and communications regulators with responsibilities assigned to sector ministries and individual institutions under sectoral guidance. Uganda has established a National AI Task Force to support strategy development, while regulatory responsibilities remain distributed among existing institutions.

The country profiles reflect different institutional arrangements for coordinating AI governance. Rwanda has established a Responsible AI Office to coordinate and monitor implementation of its National AI Policy, while the other countries rely on combinations of government ministries, committees, task forces, data-protection authorities and sector regulators. These arrangements provide an institutional foundation for AI governance but do not, in themselves, determine whether a single AI regulator is required. The relevant governance question across the four countries concerns how central coordinating mechanisms, including Rwanda's Responsible AI Office, relate to existing sector regulators and implementing institutions. The operation of each model will depend, in part, on the clarity of institutional mandates, the allocation of regulatory and enforcement responsibilities, and the mechanisms established to address areas of overlap.

d. Data governance as a central component of AI policy

The four profiles demonstrate that data governance is being addressed through different but related instruments and initiatives. Kenya is developing a National Data Governance Policy focused on matters including data sharing and interoperability. Rwanda has adopted a National Data Sharing Policy governing inter-agency data exchange. Tanzania's approach combines its data-protection framework with

investment in Kiswahili language resources and associated research capacity. Uganda is finalising a National Data Strategy and is implementing the Big Data Utilization Strategy 2023–2027, alongside its existing data-protection framework.

These developments show that the AI ecosystem is increasingly connected to wider questions concerning the availability, quality, interoperability and local relevance of data. The country profiles also identify recurring considerations relating to fragmented public-sector datasets, rural and urban disparities in connectivity, specialised technical capacity and the availability of representative local-language data. These considerations do not arise uniformly in every country, but they influence the conditions under which national AI objectives may be implemented.

e. Policy development and implementation are progressing concurrently

From the country profiles we note, Kenya is establishing coordination arrangements while finalising its AI and data governance policies. Rwanda has paired its National AI Policy with a readiness and maturity framework and sector-focused initiatives through the AI Scaling Hub. Tanzania is developing its national strategy while implementing sectoral guidance and supporting applications in areas such as agriculture, health and financial services. Uganda is undertaking a readiness assessment and strategy-development process alongside university-based research and sectoral applications.

The pattern suggests that policy formulation, institutional development and practical adoption are not occurring as separate stages. They are progressing concurrently, with implementation experiences informing the key questions that national frameworks

may need to address. Notably, in countries where national AI instruments have been adopted, implementation is still developing, therefore, a key area for future assessment will be the development and application of implementation indicators, including institutional responsibilities, implementation milestones, resource allocation, sectoral reach and reported outcomes. The indicators would, as such, provide a clearer basis for assessing how policy commitments are translated into institutional practice and practical adoption over time.

f. Interconnected nature of sectoral activity and national policy development

Agriculture, health, education, financial services and public administration recur as priority areas across the country profiles, although the nature and scale of activity vary. Kenya's national strategy identifies several of these sectors as priorities and is accompanied by technical-standard development. Rwanda is pursuing sectoral projects through the AI Scaling Hub. Tanzania has developed AI guidance for health and education, with practical applications in agriculture and financial services. Uganda's emerging applications are substantially connected to university research, particularly in health, agriculture and local-language technologies.

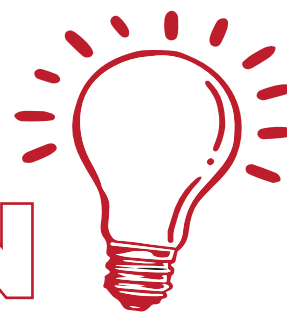
On the one hand, these developments indicate that sectoral practice may influence the content of broader AI policy instruments. On the other hand, national policy instruments as observed provide common principles and coordination mechanisms to guide AI adoption across different sectors. This relationship therefore suggests that sectoral implementation and national policy development are likely to continue informing one another as the AI ecosystems evolve.

g. Regional coordination is emerging alongside national policy development

The East African Community's AI declaration and the regional AI strategy development process introduce an additional layer to the national developments noted. The country profiles identify several areas in which regional coordination may be relevant, including data interoperability, language resources, specialised skills, research collaboration and shared infrastructure. At present, regional efforts represent an emerging platform for coordination through which member states can align national initiatives and consider common approaches to cross-border AI policy and governance issues. Notably, its practical effect will depend on how the regional framework is implemented and connected to existing national policy, legal and institutional arrangements.

5.0

CONCLUSION



The East African artificial intelligence policy landscape is characterised by a transition from preliminary digital strategies to more explicit and specialised AI policy instruments. While the pace and specific policy sequences vary across Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda, there is a collective movement toward establishing AI as a core component of national development and digital transformation. The regional outlook suggests that while national pathways differ, the common objective is to foster an environment where technological innovation is balanced with ethical safeguards and socio-economic priorities. Kenya and Rwanda have formalised their strategic directions through dedicated national instruments, with Tanzania and Uganda currently developing their respective strategies while completing comprehensive readiness assessments. These different pathways indicate that regional alignment is not occurring through a singular model but through nationally specific processes that reflect local legal and institutional contexts. A key observation of this outlook is that the absence of dedicated statutes in most jurisdictions does not imply a regulatory vacuum, as AI regulation remains anchored in foundational legal structures, particularly constitutional protections and data protection legislation complemented by other foundational laws, thereby establishing a layered approach where

existing laws regarding privacy, cybersecurity, and consumer protection provide the primary binding obligations for developers and users. Whether these frameworks eventually evolve into dedicated legislation or remain sector-specific guidelines, as seen in, depends on each country's evolving regulatory needs.

The outlook further observes that the maturation of the regional ecosystem is also anchored on the evolution of data governance, as evidenced by Rwanda's National Data Sharing Policy and Kenya's draft National Data Governance Policy. These initiatives aim to treat data as a national asset by dismantling institutional silos and improving interoperability, which are recognised as essential prerequisites for training locally relevant models. Furthermore, efforts to develop linguistic resources, such as the Kiswahili data initiatives in Tanzania and natural language processing research in Uganda, highlight an emerging focus on linguistic and cultural sovereignty within the digital sphere. The outlook therefore provides a baseline for identifying and tracking national developments in the AI policy ecosystem, while examining how these initiatives collectively shape the wider regional landscape. In doing so, it describes the current state of AI policy and governance in East Africa and establishes a basis for monitoring its future trajectory.

6.0

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