AI FORUM: ADVANCING KENYA'S DIGITAL FUTURE IN THE WORLD OF WORK

SHAPING POLICIES, EMPOWERING STAKEHOLDERS, AND TRANSFORMING KENYA'S WORLD OF WORK THROUGH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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Information Note

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In the rapidly evolving landscape of AI, the world of work is undergoing a transformative shift. Imagine workplaces where AI-driven systems customize tasks and processes to align with each worker's unique strengths and needs. Picture data analytics, empowered by AI's formidable capabilities, uncovering insights that revolutionize decision-making and unlock untapped opportunities within vast data landscapes.

The Kenya AI Forum is a premier event dedicated to exploring the intersection of artificial intelligence and the evolving world of work. Building on ITCILO's successful initiatives, such as Innovation Day, the launch of the [AI Masterclass](), and the [Global AI Forum (11-13 September 2024)](), this forum leverages insights from leading AI experts. It aims to catalyze meaningful discussions, disseminate knowledge, and inspire impactful AI-focused reflections at national and regional levels, shaping the future of work in Kenya and beyond.

SYSTEM-LEVEL CHALLENGES

In an increasingly interconnected world, the challenges posed by AI transcend the boundaries of individual organizations. While each organization faces unique challenges, the complexity and scale of these issues often demand solutions that go beyond siloed efforts. A **system-level approach**, rooted in multi-stakeholder engagement, is essential to amplify the impact of potential solutions and address the multifaceted nature of AI-related challenges effectively.

System-level challenges arise from the need for multiple organizations to work collaboratively, leveraging their diverse expertise and perspectives. These challenges often require **designing holistic and inclusive solutions that address complex problems**, such as integrating AI into multi-sectoral policies or tackling labour intermediation and labour market information systems.

By fostering a collaborative environment, stakeholders can co-create strategies that not only address immediate organizational needs but also contribute to broader, systemic advancements.

The Kenya AI Forum exemplifies this approach by targeting key institutions working in the digitalization space, particularly within the Education, Training, and Labour Market domains. Bringing together public and private stakeholders, the Forum creates a platform for shared learning, collective problem-solving, and the co-design of innovative solutions.

The challenges will be defined through a participatory approach looking holistically at the following seven dimensions of potential use of Artificial Intelligence in the Kenyan context:

1. **Policy and Governance of AI:** To ensure the ethical and equitable deployment of artificial intelligence in Kenya. The challenge lies in developing regulatory frameworks that balance innovation with oversight, addressing issues such as data privacy, algorithmic fairness, and accountability. Policies must also facilitate cross-sectoral collaboration to align AI development with national priorities and labour market needs, creating a cohesive approach to harnessing AI's transformative potential.

2. **Labour Market functioning:** To integrate AI into labour market information systems and intermediation platforms to enhance job matching, skills forecasting, and workforce planning. This requires multi-stakeholder engagement to ensure that these systems are inclusive, transparent, and adaptive to the dynamic needs of Kenya's workforce and employers.

3. **Education and Training:** To rethink education and training systems on two levels: (i) to ensure that the skills acquired meet the needs of a rapidly changing labour market, where AI and new technologies are redefining job requirements; (ii) to integrate AI as a pedagogical technology conducive to the individualisation of training paths via teachers' and trainers' improved AI literacy.

4. **Digital Inclusion of vulnerable groups:** To mitigate the risk of AI exacerbating existing inequalities, devise solutions to help vulnerable groups, including women, youth, and people with disabilities, face their specific barriers to accessing AI-driven opportunities. The challenge involves creating targeted policies and initiatives that enhance digital literacy, provide equitable access to technology, and design AI systems that are inclusive by default, enabling all segments of society to benefit from AI's advancements in the world of work.

5. **Human Resources management:** To Innovate HR processes to attract, select, train and manage talent in a context where AI plays a central role, while ensuring fairness, transparency and adaptability to new technologies.

6. **Organizational business processes:** To develop strategies to adapt and optimise organizational processes, using AI within companies to improve operational efficiency and support more informed business decisions.

7. **Civil servants' upskilling:** To ensure that civil servants can develop the necessary skills to manage and use AI and other advanced technologies, improving the effectiveness of public services and community support.

OBJECTIVES OF THE KENYA AI FORUM

The Forum is designed to enhance the practical application of AI within these objectives:

1. **Foster Policy-Level Reflection:** Promote dialogue on the integration of artificial intelligence into Kenya's digital-focused national priorities, with a particular emphasis on labour-oriented policies in the Labour Market and Vocational Training.
2. **Support Organizational and Tripartite Stakeholder Engagement:** Encourage collaborative reflections among tripartite constituents and key stakeholders—both public and private—in the Labour Market sectors. Facilitate the development of AI-driven strategies and processes aligned with labour priorities, supported by initiatives such as the ILO PROSPECTS Programme.
3. **Raise Awareness of AI's Labour Market Impact:** Highlight the implications of artificial intelligence on the Kenyan economy and workforce, including its role in reshaping employment structures, ethical considerations, and public opinion on the future of work.
4. **Showcase AI Technology for Labour Solutions:** Expose organizations to AI-driven innovations through a share fair event featuring local tech providers. Demonstrate AI applications that address critical labour challenges, such as workforce planning, skills development, and labour market intermediation.

Organizations interested in participating will have the opportunity to register a group of participants for the Forum, defining the labour-focused challenges of interest. These challenges will serve as the foundation for pre-formed multi-stakeholder groups, enabling a multidisciplinary approach to address key system-level AI challenges related to the world of work.

Over the course of the four-day Forum, participants will collaborate through a comprehensive, iterative design process using design thinking methodologies to develop innovative and practical solutions. By the end of the Forum, each group will have created tangible strategies or actionable solutions to address AI challenges.

This collaborative process is designed not only to strengthen systemic approaches but also to support individual organizations to AI implementation, driving greater integration of AI into labour-oriented policies and practices across Kenya.

AGENDA

The agenda is designed to foster collaboration, creativity, and practical application, offering a comprehensive journey into the transformative potential of artificial intelligence (AI) in the world of work.

Day 1: IDENTIFY — Challenges and the Current State of AI

The first day focuses on identifying system-level challenges and analysing the current state of AI within the Labour Market domains. Participants will explore how AI is currently being utilized in Kenya and the barriers that hinder its integration into labour-oriented policies and practices.

Day 2: EXPLORE — Envisioning the Future of AI

On the second day, participants are invited to imagine AI as a driver of change in shaping the future of work. Keynotes and panels will highlight AI's transformative possibilities, particularly in addressing labour market challenges. In group sessions, participants will collaborate to design innovative scenarios and craft visions for how AI can reshape the workplace and workforce dynamics.

Day 3: REDEFINE & APPLY — From Vision to Action

The final day focuses on translating visions into actionable solutions. Groups will refine their challenge definitions, integrate ethical and inclusive design principles, and co-develop AI-driven interventions. Using design thinking, participants will rapidly prototype solutions or strategies, and test their viability in real-world contexts.

The day culminates in a final presentations of group outputs, paving the way for next steps and future commitments.

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