

Building Kenya's digital defenders

How strategic partnerships are preparing the next generation of ICT professionals for a fast-changing digital world

As Kenya accelerates its journey towards becoming a global digital economy powerhouse, one challenge is becoming increasingly urgent: Ensuring the country has enough skilled professionals to protect its growing digital infrastructure.

From online banking and E-government services to cloud computing and artificial intelligence, Kenya's digital transformation is opening up new opportunities for innovation and economic growth. At the same time, it is exposing businesses, government institutions and citizens to an increasingly sophisticated wave of cyber threats, making investment in digital skills more important than ever.

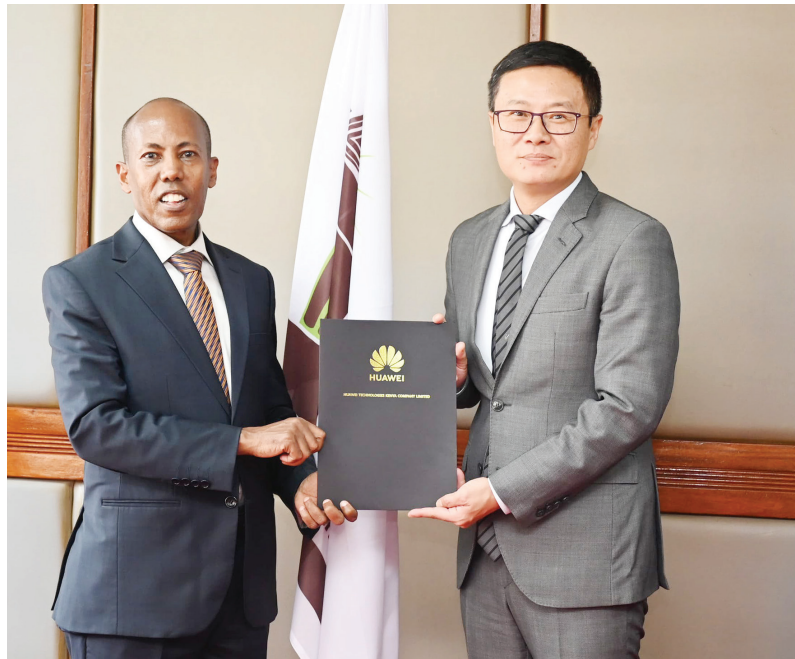
Recognising this need, Kenya has witnessed a growing collaboration between government, academia and the private sector to strengthen ICT capacity through practical training, internationally recognised certifications, and industry-led learning programmes.

One of the most significant examples is the annual National Cybersecurity Boot Camp organised through a partnership between the Communications Authority of Kenya and Huawei. The programme has rapidly become one of Kenya's premier cybersecurity talent development initiatives, attracting thousands of university and TVET students eager to test their knowledge against real-world cyber threats.

This year's competition demonstrated both the demand for cybersecurity training and the urgency of building local expertise. More than 3,000 students applied for the programme, with hundreds progressing through online learning before advancing to intensive instructor-led practical sessions. Only the country's top performers reached the final competition stage, where they tackled real-life cybersecurity challenges under industry experts.

The need for such programmes is clear. According to the Communications Authority, Kenya recorded more than 3.3 million cyber threat events in the first quarter of the year alone. Government systems, financial institutions, universities and internet service providers continue to face increasingly complex attacks, ranging from malware and phishing to brute-force intrusions and web application attacks.

While technology continues to evolve rapidly, experts argue that the



Huawei Kenya Deputy CEO Mr James Sun Quan (right), and Kenya School of Government Director General, Prof Nura Mohamed, EBS, display the signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) following a partnership agreement on training, digital skills development, and institutional collaboration. The signing was done earlier this year at the Kenya School of Government.

strongest defence against cybercrime is not software but skilled people.

That philosophy has also shaped Huawei's long-running ICT Academy programme, which has partnered with universities and other higher learning institutions across Kenya to provide students with industry-oriented training in networking, cloud computing, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and emerging digital technologies.

Unlike traditional classroom learning, ICT Academy combines academic instruction with practical laboratory experience, preparing graduates with globally recognised certifications and hands-on skills demanded by today's employers. The initiative has helped bridge the gap between university education and industry requirements, creating a pipeline of young professionals ready for Kenya's digital economy.

The country's digital skills agenda is now extending beyond students to

include public service leaders.

In a landmark move, the Kenya School of Government (KSG) and Huawei Kenya recently entered into a strategic partnership aimed at equipping government officials with advanced knowledge in artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, cloud computing and digital governance.

The collaboration seeks to transform KSG into a centre of excellence for digital public sector leadership, ensuring civil servants are prepared to deliver efficient, secure and technology-driven public services. The partnership also aligns with Kenya's Vision 2030 and the National Digital Masterplan, which place digital transformation at the centre of national development.

The agreement will see thousands of public officers undergo specialised digital skills training over the coming years, strengthening the government's ability to respond to emerging technological challenges while



Members of the Kenya Huawei ICT Academy Cloud Team celebrate after winning the Global Cloud Track title at the Huawei ICT Competition Global Finals held in Shenzhen, China, in June 2026.

improving service delivery to citizens.

These initiatives reflect a broader shift in Kenya's ICT landscape, where investment is increasingly focused on people rather than infrastructure alone.

As artificial intelligence reshapes industries and cyber threats become more sophisticated, employers are seeking professionals who possess practical experience alongside academic qualifications. Competitions, innovation challenges, certification programmes and industry partnerships are becoming essential components of higher education.

The impact extends beyond employment.

Young innovators equipped with advanced ICT skills are creating start-ups, developing local digital solutions, supporting government digitisation projects and contributing to Kenya's growing reputation as one of Africa's leading technology hubs.

Industry observers believe that

strengthening cybersecurity capacity will also increase investor confidence, protect critical national infrastructure and support the country's ambitions of becoming a regional centre for digital services.

The future of Kenya's digital economy will not simply be measured by faster internet or smarter technologies, but by the strength of the workforce behind them.

By investing in programmes such as the National Cybersecurity Boot Camp, Huawei ICT Academy and strategic partnerships with institutions like KSG, Kenya is building more than digital infrastructure. It is nurturing the next generation of innovators, cybersecurity professionals and technology leaders who will secure the country's digital future.

In an era where cyber resilience is becoming a national priority, these investments in human capital may prove to be the country's greatest competitive advantage.



Students from the Huawei ICT Academy Kenya participate in the Regional Awards Ceremony during the Connected Africa Summit 2026 in Nairobi, where they were recognised for outstanding performance in the Huawei ICT Competition.



Winners pose for a group photo during the Cyber Security Bootcamp Awards Ceremony organised through a partnership between Huawei Kenya and the Communications Authority of Kenya, in Nairobi, in May 2026.