



AKI

ASSOCIATION
OF KENYA INSURERS

THE INSURER

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INSURANCE IN TRANSITION:

***NAVIGATING CHANGE
AND NEW REALITIES***

GA DDE MIT!!!

LIFE THREW A CURVEBALL?
HEALTH FREAKED OUT?
FIRE DID A CAMEO?
PROPERTY WENT AMISS?
CAR CATASTROPHE?

If any of these haven't happened yet, then there's no better time to reach out to us than now, before they do.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editor's Note	02
AKI Journal News	04
Finding a regulatory Balance- Are regulations promoting or curtailing the Business?	06
Inside Kenya's Insurance Digital Transformation- AKI Research Highlights	08
How Legal support for Agricultural Insurance could drive Africa's Sustainability	10
Breaking the Age Barrier: Conversations with Kenya's Young Leaders	12
Transformation in Realtime- A review of 2025 and the 2026 Outlook	16
What next for IFRS-17- Navigating the post-implementation landscape	18
A Social Media cheat sheet for insurers	20
Never say die - Angela Kamau's story	24
The revolution will be underwritten-How AI is creating leaders and laggards	28
The Future is Embedded- Why Kenya's Digital credentials are a big opportunity for the insurance sector	30
Future Proofing Insurance- How IFRS S1 and S2 will catalyse Holistic risk Management across the Insurance industry	32
Insurance isn't the problem- The experience is	34
Financial Stability in the festive season and beyond- A Kenyan Guide to Planning, Protection and Prosperity	36
The Rethink: Cracking MSME Insurance	38
Finding my Ikigai- The Japanese Secret to a Long and Happy Life	40



WHICH DIRECTION IS CHANGE TAKING YOU?



Change is in the air. And the air is full of tension, tough choices and anxiety. But that same air is also pregnant with opportunity.

This is the dual reality of navigating change. It can be a nerve wracking, energy draining experience or it can be a challenging and rewarding affair.

The insurance sector today is a business in the midst of change. It is a business rocked by the disruptive influence of AI, beset by demands of a climate crisis and in Africa by the unbelievable energy of a new generation.

In this edition we explore various perspectives around these issues. We delve into the digital shift that is happening in real time in insurance companies today. We explore the impact of AI and how the choices that are being made today will determine whether you stand with the leaders or the laggards when the dust settles.

To help make sense of where Kenya Insurers are digitally, we present the findings of an AKI study that measures digital maturity. For those who like their change with a dash of opportunity we discuss the possibilities offered by embedded insurance

To help navigate the opportunities of social media Moses Kemibaro provides a social media primer for effective engagement and growth.

For our leadership feature we tell the story Angela Kamau of Corporate Insurance who joined insurance to find out why her father was not treated well by insurance companies. She ended up staying long enough to run a couple of insurance companies.

The inter-generational workplace is a reality in all insurance companies. But what happens when the boss is younger than their team? How does that dynamic unfold? We speak to three young leaders who are leading teams at Britam, Zanara and Liberty-Heritage

The impact of sustainability on the insurance sector is unfolding and will continue to do so for a few years. Patrick Alushula explores how legal backing for agricultural insurance can be a critical part of the solution and helpfully dissects the National Treasury's proposed insurance regulations for index insurance.

Iara Sousa argues that embracing sustainability reporting and the new IFRS S1 and IFRS S2 in particular will help insurers to see round the corner and prepare for whatever the planet has in store in way that is helpful to society and that keeps insurers in sound financial health.

And because we support financial prudence, we give you a piece on avoiding the predictable January blues that inevitably follows the festive season.

Lastly, the Japanese are a curious case when it comes to longevity. Central to this is Ikigai—the intersection of passion, mission, vocation, and profession—which is widely regarded as the foundation of one's reason for being and, by extension, a contributor to long life. The concept is conveyed simply, often through storytelling, and is anchored on four guiding questions: What do you love? What are you good at? What does the world need? And what can sustain you?

Happy Holidays and good luck navigating change however you see it.



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the Bima Yangu App now*





APA Insurance tops AKI annual games

APA Insurance were the overall winners of the AKI Insurance Sports Tournament 2025. They finished the season with 99 points, ahead of CIC Group in second with 52 points and Liberty-Heritage in third with 37 points.

The tournament kicked off on 4 August with league matches across various ball games and culminated with finals held on 4 October. GA Insurance successfully defended their 2024 football title, Britam clinched the basketball

cup, and CIC Group secured the volleyball trophy, while APA Insurance won the netball cup.

The tournament seeks to promote physical activity among insurance professionals while fostering teamwork, camaraderie, and stronger relationships across the industry.

Kenya takes the helm at the Africa Insurance Women Association



Kenya's Catherine Wahome is the new President of the Africa Insurance Women Association (AIWA). Catherine was elected for a two-year term and is joined on the Executive Council by fellow Kenyans Madeleine Nangayo (Membership Secretary) and Diana Chepng'eno (Education Secretary).

Catherine, who also serves as President of Kenya Women in Insurance, brings a wealth of experience that will help strengthen AIWA's mission of advancing women in insurance across the continent.

AIWA, now active in 26 countries, is committed to nurturing talent, mentoring emerging leaders, and enhancing women's representation in senior roles. Through leadership programmes, workshops, and mentorship initiatives, the association works to address barriers that hold women back and to empower the next generation of female leaders in insurance.

FUTURE LEADERS OF INSURANCE 2025 SHOWCASES YOUTH-DRIVEN INNOVATION



CYNTHIA SINDANI Britam
Winner



CHRIS MBURU OLD MUTUAL
2nd Position



VICTOR OPIYO MADISON
3rd Position



ALLAN KIZILI PRUDENTIAL
4th Position



FELISTER KIBUE GEMINIA LIFE INSURANCE
5th Position

Cynthia Sindani of Britam emerged as the winner of the 2025 Future Leaders of Insurance competition. Now in its fifth edition, the initiative attracted 199 entries underlining the competition's growing impact and relevance.

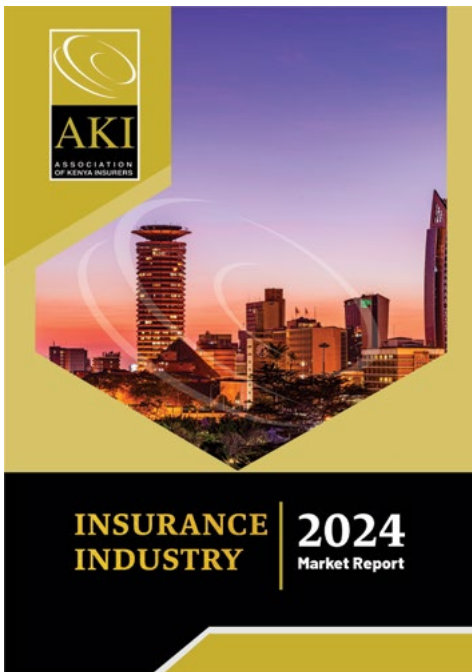
Chris Mburu of Old Mutual Life Kenya secured second place, followed by Victor Opiyo of the Madison Group in third place. Allan Kizili from Prudential and Felister Kibue of Geminia Life Insurance finished in fourth and fifth positions respectively.

This year's winners had the opportunity to pitch their ideas at the AKI Life Insurance Forum and to the IRA CEO and Commissioner of Insurance. Past winners have gone on to gain industry recognition, enjoy significant career

growth and participate in the development and testing of their proposer products.

The Future Leaders of Insurance is an AKI initiative for engaging young professionals within member companies. Participants are challenged to design innovative, technology-driven insurance solutions tailored to the needs of young people.

Launched in 2020, the initiative targets Kenya's young and digitally savvy demographic. It emphasizes the development of insurance products for this segment as a critical investment in the long-term sustainability and growth of the insurance industry.



In second year of IFRS-17 adoption, Kenya's Insurance Sector Records steady growth

Insurance penetration registered a marginal rise to 2.44% from 2.41% in 2023, calculated using the global benchmark of Gross Written Premium (KES 395.3 billion) against GDP (KES 16.2 trillion). The non-life segment maintained its dominance generating KES 204.25 billion in insurance revenue an 8.52% rise from KES 188.53 billion in 2023. Medical insurance remained the largest contributor at KES 73.47 billion (35.97%), followed by motor insurance (commercial and private combined) at KES 59.15 billion (28.96%).

Life insurance recorded steady growth of 7%, with revenue increasing to KES 70.9 billion from KES 66.4 billion. The Group Life segment led the category with KES 37.2 billion in revenue and a 52.47% market share, driven by increased demand for employee benefit solutions. Ordinary Life followed with 25.03% (KES 17.8 billion). Annuities/Income Drawdown ranked third at KES 7.8 billion (10.94%), while Pensions/Deposit Administration generated KES 6.6 billion (9.28%). Investment/Unit Linked products contributed KES 1.6 billion (2.28%).

Kenya's insurance industry posted solid performance in 2024 while navigating the second year of reporting under the IFRS-17 standard. With initial compliance largely achieved, insurers shifted their focus to optimizing operations, strengthening systems, and enhancing cross-functional collaboration.

Core insurance activities delivered improved results, with insurance service revenue rising by 8% to KES 275.18 billion, up from KES 255.11 billion in 2023. The insurance services result surged 45% to KES 16.35 billion from KES 11.28 billion indicating stronger operational efficiency and profitability. Net investment income increased by 93% to KES 112.74 billion compared to KES 58.17 billion the previous year.


Industry-wide trends mirrored global developments. The integration of Artificial Intelligence is expected to transform operations by improving customer engagement, streamlining claims management, and enhancing fraud detection. However, rising digitization also heightens cyber-risk exposure, underscoring the need for stronger cyber security frameworks and positioning cyber insurance as a growing opportunity. On ESG, insurers continued implementation efforts but are reassessing strategies to better align stakeholder and employee expectations. Talent management remained a concern, particularly the shortage of technology-skilled professionals and widening generational gaps that threaten knowledge transfer.

The legislative and regulatory environment remained dynamic, especially in taxation, with further changes anticipated in the year ahead.

Finding a regulatory balance:

Are Regulations Promoting or Curtailing the Business?

By Lynn Obwanda



In early 2025, California experienced a series of devastating wildfires that left thousands homeless and caused projected losses of hundreds of billions of dollars. Major insurers moved to reassess their exposure, raising concerns about the (in) stability of the insurance market in the state.

To stabilize the situation, the California Department of Insurance and the Insurance Commissioner introduced several regulatory intervention including a one-year moratorium preventing insurers from cancelling or refusing to renew policies in wildfire-impacted areas. The new regulations also required insurers to continue offering coverage in high-risk wildfire zones, despite their reluctance to do so due to the escalating risk.

Between 2023 and 2025, home insurance premiums in California surged by approximately 41%. Private insurers limited or stopped writing new policies in fire-prone regions, driving many homeowners to FAIR Plan, the state's insurer of last resort. As a result, FAIR PLAN found itself in financial strain as it struggled to settle growing claim obligations and remain solvent.

In Kenya, the insurance industry has faced persistent challenges underwriting Public Service Vehicles (PSVs). Under the Insurance law PSV insurance is mandatory, but the segment has proven difficult for insurers to sustain.

Due to the high risk involved, only a small number of companies remain willing to underwrite PSVs. Consequently, these insurers are disproportionately burdened with a large volume of claims, exerting immense pressure on their financial stability. This imbalance has contributed to the collapse of several insurance companies over the years.

Widespread fraud is the major driver of losses in the PSV insurance sector. It is, unfortunately, common for various stakeholders to fabricate and inflate claims which undermines the sector's viability.

To make things worse, the few underwriters that are still in the PSV business undercut each other at every turn resulting in low premiums compared to the risk carried and this places companies at precarious financial positions. Yet, competition laws prevent the regulator from fixing the premium rates the sector desperately needs.

The situation from California and Kenya are not unique and they highlight the regulatory tightrope of balancing consumer protection, affordable premiums, and the financial sustainability of insurers in high-risk environments.

Where Is the Balance?

Insurance plays a vital role in economic development by protecting lives, livelihoods, and assets from risk. It cushions society from the impact of adverse events and attracts private capital, making it essential for a resilient economy. Recent climate-related disasters, COVID-19, and other devastations have increased public vulnerability and highlighted the value of strong insurance markets.

Kenya's National Treasury and the Insurance Regulatory Authority (IRA) recently proposed thirteen (13) statutory instruments that are currently undergoing public participation. These draft regulations and guidelines aim to strengthen regulatory oversight, plug existing gaps, and align Kenya's insurance legal framework with the evolving needs of the sector.

While the intention is commendable, there needs to be a balance between creating an enabling environment or increasing cost of doing business that could lead to reduced competitiveness and increased barriers of entry. Effective regulatory frameworks should promote fair market conduct, apply proportionate licensing and approval requirements, ensure consistent enforcement, and institute transparent supervisory processes. Ideally, regulatory reforms should be developed in consultation with industry stakeholders and tailored to the unique needs of each market to encourage growth and innovation.

For the economy to thrive, policyholders and investors must feel secure. When legal and regulatory environments create uncertainty, they discourage market entry, stifle innovation, and reduce competition ultimately harming the very consumers they aim to protect.

Both regulators and players have a role to play in the growth of responsive, sustainable insurance systems.

Measures regulators can take to create the balance.

- Maintain constructive dialogue with industry players to support a stronger, more sustainable insurance market.
- Relax or remove strict regulations to encourage product innovation.
- Support the use of technology and data analytics to better meet consumer needs.
- Expand digital and alternative distribution channels to help insurers reach remote or underserved areas cost-effectively.
- Implement risk-based regulations that are proportionate, minimally intrusive, and adaptable to changing market conditions.
- Promote financial literacy and risk awareness through collaboration with industry and government agencies.

Expectations for Insurers

- Educate policymakers and government officials on insurance's role in protecting communities, supporting economic growth, and strengthening resilience.
- Maintain open, constructive dialogue with regulators to address market challenges and propose solutions.
- Actively promote risk awareness and financial literacy among consumers.
- Develop simple, affordable products tailored to specific market segments.

The writer is the Head of Legal and Statutory Affairs, at the Association of Kenya Insurers

Inside Kenya's Insurance Digital Transformation:

AKI Research Highlights

Login successful

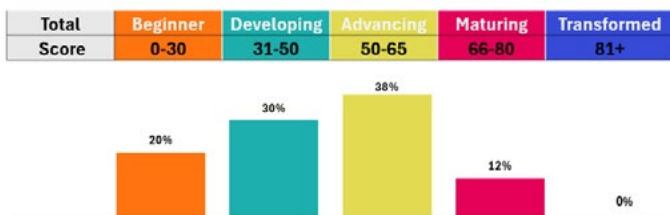


The digital wave is no longer approaching; it has already reached the shore and changed how insurers operate across the world. Companies are embracing data-driven operations, AI-enabled claims processing, seamless customer journeys, and mobile-first ecosystems. Considering these shifts, the Association of Kenyan Insurers (AKI), in collaboration with Ipsos, carried out a Digital Maturity Study to get a clear picture of the industry's level of digital readiness.

The study had three objectives.

- To evaluate the current state of digital adoption across the sector.
- To benchmark Kenya's progress against global best practices in markets such as Malaysia, Australia, China, and South Africa; and
- To provide a clear roadmap that insurers can use to accelerate their digital maturity.

The study adopted a global digital maturity framework covering seven critical dimensions: Strategy, People, Customer, Data, Culture, Operations and Technology. This approach is based on the reality that digital transformation is more than acquiring new systems. It requires alignment of leadership vision, employee capability, a culture that supports innovation, efficient processes and the ability to use data insights to deliver better customer experiences.



The findings present a clear reality check; **Kenya's overall Digital Maturity Index stands at 49.5 percent.** This score that places the industry in the "Developing" category. While the industry has moved beyond the beginner stage, there is still work to be done to reach advanced levels of maturity. Only 12 percent of insurers have reached the "Maturing" stage, while 38 percent are now in the "Advancing" category, showing that meaningful progress is underway towards a "Transformed" industry.

A closer look at the seven dimensions reveals a clear hierarchy in performance. Strategy scored the highest at 54.9 percent, which reflects strong leadership awareness and clear intentions around digital transformation.



However, Customer Centricity scored the lowest at 44.7 percent telling us that although there is commitment at the top, customers are yet to experience seamless or personalised digital journeys. **This is a useful reminder that transformation is ultimately measured by the customer, not by the plans we put on paper.**

One of the most striking findings is what we call the "Data Idle" challenge. Many insurers have made progress in establishing data governance frameworks. However, the ability to leverage on advanced analytics to convert data into meaningful insights remains low. The industry has accumulated valuable data over the years, but the analytical engines required to turn that data into business intelligence are still underdeveloped. As a result, opportunities for personalised pricing, customer segmentation, fraud detection, and automated decision-making remain largely untapped. This is a major opportunity waiting to be unlocked.

To address these gaps, the study proposes several practical steps that insurers can take in the next one to two years.

- Strengthening strategic alignment by ensuring that digital roadmaps are clearly communicated, regularly measured, and transparently linked to business outcomes.
- Building internal digital capability through sustained upskilling initiatives and purposeful recruitment in key areas such as IT, analytics, user experience, and automation.
- Enhancing data readiness is another key priority by investing in clean, integrated data platforms that can support more sophisticated analytics and AI applications.
- Finally, insurers can begin automating high-volume, low-complexity processes such as basic claims intake, policy renewals, and routine customer interactions.

Global experiences offer useful lessons. Malaysia's strong regulatory direction and rapid growth of Insurtech have driven customer-centric, mobile-first experiences.



Australia has leveraged advanced analytics and generative AI into claims and customer service workflows. While Kenya is still strengthening its foundation, the progress made so far shows that the sector is moving in the right direction.

The Digital Maturity Index of 49.5 percent should therefore be viewed as a baseline that reveals both strengths and opportunities. With more than one-third of insurers already in the Advancing category, the sector has the energy to move forward. The challenge then is how to move from having a digital strategy to living it; in operations, in data utilisation, in leadership decisions, and most importantly, in the experiences that customers encounter every day.

The future of insurance in Kenya is digital. The question is at what pace will we move towards that future?

The findings are from the AKI Digital Transformation in the Insurance Sector in Kenya Research Report

How legal support for agricultural insurance can drive Africa's sustainability

By Patrick Alushula



In the wake of the rising frequency and intensity of climate change events, legal support for agricultural insurance could be the most promising pathway to advance Africa's sustainability ambitions. As climate risks intensify, traditional coping mechanisms are proving inadequate to cater for the attendant risks, highlighting the need for risk-transfer tools that protect farmers and strengthen resilience.

Agricultural insurance, supported by sound legal and regulatory frameworks, offers a viable and scalable solution.

Kenya has already embarked on this path by drafting legislation to standardise products, regulate insurers, protect farmers and encourage innovation.

The Insurance (Index Insurance) Regulations, 2025, drafted by the National Treasury under the Insurance Act (Cap 487), mark a major milestone in efforts to build financial resilience against droughts, floods and other climate disasters.

Once gazetted, they will give legal force to index-based insurance—a model that links payouts to measurable indicators such as rainfall, temperature or vegetation cover, rather than to individual loss assessments.

Insurers have been developing and rolling out climate change-related insurance such as livestock and crop covers in response to the rising severity and frequency of climate change shocks such as floods and droughts. However, there has been no formal regulations to govern such products, leaving insurers to depend on the overall laws governing the insurance industry in Kenya.

Under the proposed framework, insurers offering index insurance—also known as parametric insurance—will be required to design products that are fair, transparent and scientifically sound. They will also be required to settle claims within 10 days; a far-reaching development that will undoubtedly boost confidence. Strengthening agricultural insurance can help shift agriculture from a fragile, climate-exposed sector to a resilient engine of sustainable growth.

Formalising climate risk protection

For years, Kenya has experimented with index insurance through donor-funded initiatives such as the Kenya Livestock Insurance Programme (KLIP). These schemes helped cushion smallholder farmers and pastoralists from the effects of drought, encouraging private sector insurers to start rolling out their own products. Now, the new rules seek to provide clear criteria for product design, approval and payout obligations, while introducing consumer safeguards and accountability for insurers.

Index insurance provides compensation based on pre-agreed environmental data rather than physical inspections of damage. For instance, if rainfall in each county drops below a set threshold, every insured farmer in that zone automatically receives a payout. This approach drastically reduces administrative costs and allows insurers to cover rural clients quickly and efficiently. It is particularly useful in the agricultural and livestock sectors, where verifying individual losses can be costly or logistically impossible. The draft regulations require every index product to be pre-approved by the Insurance Regulatory Authority (IRA) which provides a layer of oversight.

Insurers will be required to submit detailed documentation, including policy wording, pricing and an explanation of how the index was developed. Independent calculating agents—responsible for computing triggers and payouts—will also be vetted and recognized by the IRA. The agents must be qualified professionals with previous experience in index computation or meteorological analysis.

Consumer Protection

To strengthen consumer rights in the emerging climate insurance market, insurers will be required to prepare a key features statement describing all policy terms, benefits, premiums and potential risks. The policies must be non-cancellable once coverage begins, ensuring that farmers remain protected throughout the insured period.

In addition, each policy will include a dispute-resolution mechanism and a fallback formula for calculating payouts in case the primary index data becomes unavailable, for example, if a satellite feed or weather station temporarily fails.

In a separate instrument, the Insurance (Amendment) Regulations, 2025, agricultural insurance will formally become a separate class of insurance with three sub classes: livestock, crop and aquaculture. The Treasury estimates that climate-related shocks already cost the country more than 3% of GDP annually, affecting agriculture, infrastructure and livelihoods.

Across the world, index-based insurance is gaining popularity in the wake of the rising severity and frequency of climate change shocks such as floods and droughts. In markets such as India, Latin America and the Caribbean, parametric insurance has become a key tool for disaster risk financing.

For instance, the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) pays member states within two weeks of a hurricane or earthquake, while African Risk Capacity (ARC) offers similar drought coverage to African countries.

Similar frameworks have emerged in countries like Ghana, Nigeria and India, where governments are promoting index insurance as a way to safeguard smallholders from climate volatility. Across the continent, agriculture remains the backbone of most economies. In Kenya, agriculture contributes about 20% of GDP and employs 70% of rural households.

During the 2020–2023 drought—the worst in four decades—millions of livestock perished and crop yields plummeted, pushing thousands of families into food insecurity. A year later, flash floods ravaged the same communities, underscoring the urgency of the need for insurance tools to address both extremes.

** This article first appeared in Africa Ahead publication
The writer is an award-winning business journalist with Nation Media Group*

BREAKING THE AGE BARRIER:

Conversations with Kenya's Young Leaders

As Kenya's insurance and financial services sector evolves, a new generation of leaders is stepping into positions of influence, often earlier in their careers and within multigenerational teams. These young leaders are navigating perceptions around age, authority, and experience while driving change in increasingly complex and fast-moving workplaces.

In this AKI Journal feature, we speak to emerging young leaders to understand what leadership looks like from their perspective. They share candid insights on leading diverse teams, earning trust across age groups, the advantages and challenges of leading early, and the unique strengths they bring to the table.



DEBORAH NALIKA

The Quiet Force behind Britam's Inclusive Future

Deborah Naliaka Njoroge leads Business Development at Britam Connect, Britam's inclusive insurance arm. She spends her days building the bridges that bring protection closer to people who are often excluded.

For Deborah, this work is personal and rooted in the belief that everyday Kenyans deserve a safety net they can trust.

1. Tell us about your leadership role, how many people do you lead, and what is the general age mix within your team?

In my role as Head of Business Development at Britam Connect, I lead a multi-channel team responsible for widening the insurance safety net to communities often overlooked by traditional financial services. I guide 8 colleagues- an interesting mix of early-20s professionals and seasoned officers in their mid-30s.

This blend of youth and experience gives us range. It allows us to understand the rhythms of different communities and design solutions that make sense.

2. Have you noticed any differences in how older and younger colleagues relate to you?

Yes, and it's fascinating. Younger colleagues click with me almost immediately. We share similar worldviews, work at the same pace, and a kind of instinctive digital fluency.

With older colleagues, there is a different dynamic. They appreciate structure, discipline, and measured thinking. Sometimes it takes a moment for them to sync with my fast-paced, solution-oriented style. The good news is that once they see the consistency and clarity behind my decisions, the relationship deepens into genuine mutual respect.

Britam's leadership development programs have helped me to lead across generations upwards and downwards with empathy, firmness, and results.

3. To what extent do you feel your age influences how people perceive you as a leader positively or negatively?

Age shapes the first handshake. Some look at youth and assume inexperience; others see energy and possibility. But perceptions evolve quickly. Once people interact with me, my clarity, discipline, and commitment to excellence stand out. Over time, performance softens any bias about age.

4. Do you feel that being a young leader gives you advantages in today's workplace?

Absolutely. Adaptability is my biggest advantage. Britam Connect operates in a constantly shifting environment, and being able to pivot quickly is essential. I'm naturally digital-first, data-inclined, and collaborative. These qualities help me lead efficiently and deliver.

5. What has been the most challenging aspect of leading people who may be older or more experienced than you?

The early phase is the toughest. The part where people are quietly assessing whether your leadership matches the title. Some colleagues want to see whether you can deliver consistently before they fully align.

I navigate this by being steady, clear, and intentional about excellence. Relationship-building doesn't get sacrificed; it's part of the work.

When people experience this balance, trust comes naturally.

6. Gen Z leaders are often associated with openness, technology, and transparency. Which unique strengths do you personally bring to leadership?

Empathy, agility, accountability, and efficiency. I lean on technology to simplify, automate, and create transparency across teams. And I invest heavily in mentorship, helping colleagues build confidence, sharpen their skills, and take ownership of their work.

7. Leadership is evolving quickly, what support or organizational culture has helped you thrive? And what additional support do young leaders need?

My environment creates the right space to grow. I've benefitted from supportive senior leaders, targeted coaching, and the

freedom to innovate. Young leaders would benefit from even more exposure to strategic decision-making, stronger peer mentorship circles, and continued investment in digital and leadership development. That's how we sharpen the next generation.

8. What is one misconception people have about Gen Z leaders that you'd like to debunk?

That we're "too soft" or "too emotional." In truth, we lead with purpose, clarity, and authenticity. We care about results, transparency, and creating work environments where people can thrive, not about rigid hierarchy. That often leads to more honest and productive teams.

9. Looking ahead, how do you think Gen Z will shape the future of leadership in Kenya's insurance and financial services industry?

Gen Z will push the industry toward simpler, more accessible products especially in microinsurance because we understand the urgency of financial inclusion. We will accelerate digital transformation, champion inclusivity, and build workplaces where collaboration and continuous learning guide strategy.

The future will be faster, more connected, and more customer-led and Gen Z will be at the heart of shaping that evolution.



DIANA SHEFO

The Life Insurance solutions champion

Diana is the Lead Manager in the Group Life Department at Zamara. Diana is basically a life insurance champion. She guides organizations through the most sensitive risk, and employee benefit challenges.

1. Tell us about your leadership role — how many people do you lead, and what is the general age mix within your team?

I oversee the Group Life Client Retention and Claims Processing teams. I have twelve team members with a diverse age mix ranging from early twenties to mid-forties.

2. Have you noticed any differences in how older and younger colleagues relate to you?

I find Younger team members are more curious and open to new ideas, often asking questions. They are not hesitant to reach out for assistance or guidance. Older colleagues bring experience

and context, sometimes preferring tried-and-tested methods. I am still learning how to value both perspectives

3. To what extent do you feel your age influences how people perceive you as a leader — positively or negatively?

I don't think my age really affects how people see me. In my view, most of them focus more on what I do and how I lead.

4. Do you feel that being a young leader gives you any advantages in today's workplace?

Yes, I feel being a young leader has its advantages. I can experiment with new approaches, bring fresh ideas, and I am learning to lose the fear of making mistakes. Each challenge feels like an opportunity to grow and see things differently. It also makes it easier to connect with younger colleagues and stay open to new ideas and technologies

5. What has been the most challenging aspect of leading people who may be older or more experienced than you?

Leading people who are older or more experienced can be tricky. Sometimes it feels like they know better than you, or there's hesitation to follow the direction you suggest. I've learned that respect, listening, and confidence go a long way

6. Young leaders are often associated with openness, technology, and transparency. Which unique strengths do you personally bring to leadership that you believe come from being part of Young leader?

I am accommodating, curious, and willing to challenge old ways of doing things without being stubborn or for the sake of it. This helps me find creative solutions and connect with people across generations

7. Leadership is evolving quickly — what kind of support, training, or organisational culture has helped you thrive in your role?

I have found that continuous learning and mentorship are very important. Programs like the KWIIN Mentorship Program and the Rise Leadership Master class, along with supportive leaders both within and outside the organization, have really helped me grow in my role. The culture at Zamara, which encourages growth, inclusivity, and support, has made it easier for me to take initiative and adapt to change

And what additional support do you believe young leaders need?

I feel mentorship is essential for young leaders. They also need a supportive environment where they can share ideas without fear. Guidance on soft skills like communication, etiquette, and professional appearance is equally important, as I've realized these shape how others perceive and respond to you as a leader

8. What is one misconception people have about young leaders that you'd like to debunk?

I would like to challenge the idea of readiness that young people aren't ready to lead. My experience has showed me that given the opportunity, support and guidance young leaders can make a real impact in the organisation.

9. Looking ahead, how do you think Young Leaders will shape the future of leadership in Kenya's insurance and financial services industry?

Kenya's insurance and financial services industry is on the brink of transformation. I believe this change will be led by a new generation of young leaders who bring bold ideas, allow customers to co-create products and solutions, and harness technology to drive innovation. But perhaps more importantly, they lead with empathy and transparency. Qualities that not only redefine leadership but also promise to expand the industry's reach and impact.



JOB BOGITA **The Brand Builder**

Job's job (pun intended) is to drive the day-to-day building of the Liberty Kenya brand by shaping and delivering integrated and consistent marketing and communication efforts that support business growth.

1. Tell us about your leadership role — how many people do you lead, and what is the general age mix within your team?

As the Head of Marketing and Communications at Liberty Kenya (Liberty Life; Heritage Insurance), I lead a team of four, consisting of millennial and Gen Z professionals.

2. Have you noticed any differences in how older and younger colleagues relate to you?

I am aware of the diverse demographics, but in practice, I focus on result and performance. I see colleagues for their drive and impact rather than age. While some may notice my youth, it hasn't hindered my ability to lead or deliver — credibility comes from execution, collaboration, and results.

3. To what extent do you feel your age influences how people perceive you as a leader — positively or negatively?

I believe age influence perceptions to some extent. Some colleagues may initially see me as younger, which can lead to assumptions about experience. However, I have found that consistent delivery, clear decision-making, and visible results quickly establish credibility. In some cases, my age can also be an advantage, bringing energy, fresh perspectives, and a collaborative approach that resonates well across teams.

4. Do you feel that being a young leader gives you any advantages in today's work place?

If so, what advantages stand out most for you? –
Yes. We are able to try new ways of doing things. Today the world is evolving at a very fast rate, and the advantage is that you have the leeway to propagate an idea and watch it grow within a business

5. What has been the most challenging aspect of leading people older or more experienced than you?

The most challenging aspects has been striking the right balance between confidence and humility. Leading people who are older or more experienced requires a deep respect for the institutional knowledge they carry, while also having the courage to bring fresh ideas and challenge outdated approaches. Sometimes, people assume that age equals authority, so as a young leader, I have had to be intentional about building trust, by listening first, demonstrating competence, and showing consistency. Over time, I have found that when people see the value you bring, the generational gap becomes an asset rather than a barrier.

6. Young leaders are often associated with openness, technology, and transparency. Which unique strengths do you personally bring to leadership that you believe come from being a young Leader?

-I naturally take a digital-first approach, which is essential in modern marketing and communications. I am quick to embrace new tools, data insights, and innovative channels that strengthen customer and stakeholder engagement. I also lead with authenticity and openness, qualities that matter greatly in communications. I believe in telling the truth, simplifying complexity and building trust through transparent engagement. Another strength I bring is collaborative leadership. I am not bound by hierarchy; I believe the best ideas can come from any level or age group. This has helped me harness the collective strengths of my team, especially in cross-functional initiatives.

7. Leadership is evolving quickly — what kind of support, training, or organisational culture has helped you thrive in your role? And what additional support do you believe young leaders need?

I have been fortunate to work in environments that recognize and invest in talent, which has provided me with opportunities to take on meaningful responsibilities early in my career. My passion for digital marketing, enabled me to earn the trust of senior leaders and access to high-impact projects.

Mentorship, continuous learning, and the willingness to unlearn and relearn have been instrumental in shaping my judgment, enhancing my skills, and accelerating my growth.

Being part of a culture that encourages innovation, experimentation, and collaboration is vital.

Looking ahead, I believe young leaders would benefit from deliberate intergenerational mentorship structures that allow experience and innovation to complement each other as well as access to advanced leadership development programmes, tailored for next-generation leaders navigating digital and cultural shifts.

8. What is one misconception people have about young leaders that you'd like to debunk?

That young leaders cannot make strategic decisions to drive a company forward. This is largely untrue. By the time someone is qualified for a leadership position, they have already demonstrated the skills, resilience, and judgment that earn them a seat at the table. Young leaders bring energy, innovation, and

fresh perspectives, which can generate meaningful results just as effectively as more traditional leadership paths.

9. Looking ahead, how do you think young leaders will shape the future of leadership in Kenya's insurance and financial services industry?

I see three young leaders sparking: a more human approach to leadership, faster digital transformation and entrenching a bias for sustainability.



TRANSFORMATION IN REAL TIME:

A review of 2025 and the 2026 outlook

By Peter Mwangi

2026



Last year, James was on his motorbike when he was hit by a car. The bike was extensively damaged necessitating expensive repairs. I am insured, he thought, everything will be okay. When he got down to it, filing the insurance claim felt like climbing a mountain. Weeks went by with no word, calls went unanswered, and every day his stress levels went up not down.

Not long after James' accident, Koki, also a biker, had a similar accident. To James' horror her claim was approved in minutes. No calls, no waiting, no hassle.

The difference between digitally efficient insurers and inefficient ones is profound. In the world of the efficient insurance works seamlessly, arriving exactly when you need it. Claims are settled in minutes. Policies are embedded in your payments, travel plans, or online purchases.

In the world of the others, risks move faster than traditional systems and old models can predict and the result is customer pain.

2025: A Year of Digital Transformation

Globally 2025 was a turning point for the insurance sector. Over the year AI morphed from a back-office support solution to a growth driver. Insurers using AI report faster policy cycles, lower claim management costs, and more personalized customer experiences. According to early adopters, administration cycles are up to 40 percent faster and claim management costs lower by up to 30 percent.

Unbelievably, adoption is uneven. While most insurers are exploring AI, only slightly more than half have fully deployed it. Old systems, fragmented data, and inconsistent reporting are still limiting insurers.

Embedded Insurance, the seamless integration of insurance into the purchase of a non-insurance product, is the second headline trend of 2025. Across the world, embedded insurance experienced tremendous growth a trend that is expected to intensify delivering a rise in value from \$210 billion in 2025 to nearly \$950 billion by 2030. This distribution approach lowers acquisition costs and gives insurers access to critical behavioural and contextual data, making insurance accessible in ways traditional channels cannot.

Kenya: Growth with Challenges

Kenya's insurance premiums grew 13.4% in the first half of 2025, yet the story behind the numbers is more complex. General insurance reported a combined ratio above 108.3%, showing that rising claims and operational inefficiencies are eroding profits. Without intelligent automation and agile cost management, this growth may not be sustainable.

The Insurance Regulatory Authority introduced draft rules on index insurance, cyber security, virtual assets, and stronger corporate governance. The intention is to provide clarity, support market stability, and facilitate innovation. The IRA is also exploring a sandbox environment to offer a controlled space for testing new products and AI-driven solutions while safeguarding consumers.

Meanwhile, partnerships between insurers and fintech platforms are steadily expanding access-tens of thousands of Kenyans can now obtain microinsurance directly through mobile payment systems.

2026: Strategic Imperatives

For insurers in Kenya, 2026 will hinge on decisiveness. Those who use data smartly, innovate with purpose, and turn disruption into opportunity will find great success.

Priority areas for 2026:

- **Rebuild Risk Frameworks:** Historical data alone is no longer enough. Flexible models must account for climate shocks, rising claims, and emerging risks.
- **Leverage Data and AI:** Reliable, auditable data powers AI tools, improving decisions, speeding claims, and personalizing policies.
- **Invest in Talent:** Insurers need to attract, retain, and upskill employees to work alongside AI and make strategic decisions.
- **Innovate Distribution:** Digital platforms, embedded insurance, and strategic partnerships will be key to reaching new customers efficiently.
- **Close the Protection Gap:** Inclusive microinsurance, climate-smart solutions, and innovative risk-transfer methods can expand coverage while maintaining profitability.

Turning Disruption into Opportunity

2025 proved that insurance can no longer rely on the old ways. AI, embedded insurance, and digital platforms are transforming the industry in real time. At the same time, macroeconomic pressures, climate change, and cyber risks demand resilience and serious strategic thought.

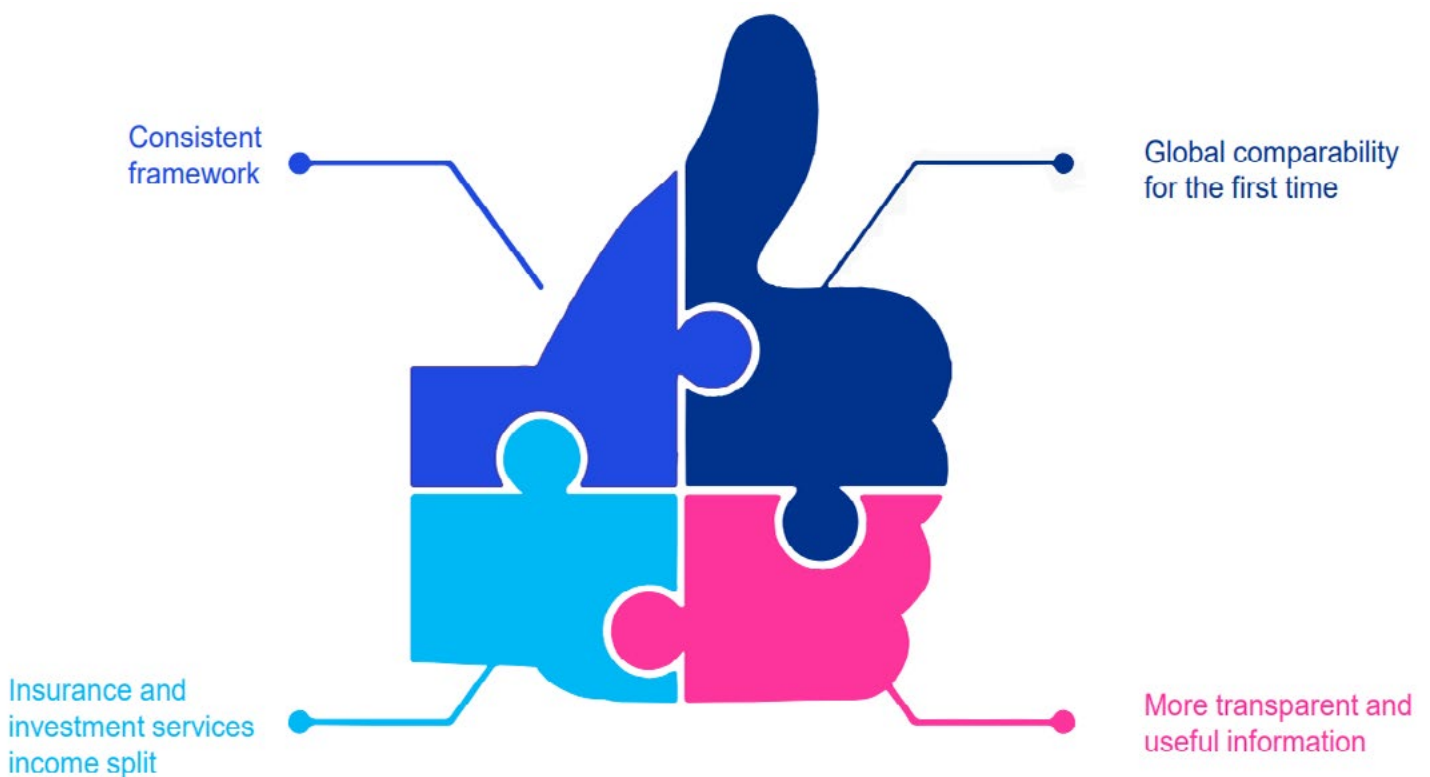
The question you need to answer in 2026 is : Will you harness data, technology, and innovation to protect communities and drive growth, or let inefficiencies hold you back?

Insurance can transcend providing compensation and help to strengthen communities, build resilience, and unlock economic stability. 2026 is a chance to realize this potential. The industry must act with vision, agility, and courage, because the next decade will be defined by those who embrace and master change.

The writer is a Research Officer at Association of Kenya Insurers

WHAT NEXT FOR IFRS 17 ?

NAVIGATING THE POST-IMPLEMENTATION LANDSCAPE



Source: KPMG IFRS 17 Post Implementation Review

The adoption of IFRS 17 in 2023 marked a significant shift in global insurance reporting. For the first time, insurers across the world are applying a unified standard for measuring, presenting, and disclosing insurance contracts. This alignment has elevated transparency and comparability, strengthened investor confidence and improved the quality of financial disclosures across markets.

In Kenya, the transition to IFRS 17 has been transformative despite the diverse regulatory environments, varied levels of market maturity, and differing states of technological readiness.

While most insurers have achieved compliance the reporting process has revealed critical challenges that continue to shape the post-implementation agenda.

Data Granularity and Availability

IFRS 17 demands granular, structured, and traceable data. The requirement to group contracts by portfolio, issue year, and profitability level demands a greater level of detail than previously required.

During implementation many organizations struggled particularly those with legacy systems which are not designed to handle detailed data capture and those where historical data was not readily available. This forced many companies to undertake extensive data remediation and invest in enhanced data infrastructure and governance frameworks.

Research from EY, Deloitte, and the IFRS Foundation highlight data quality as the biggest global bottleneck even among large insurers indicating a universal need for long-term data strategies and investment.

Expected vs Actual Cash flows

IFRS 17 requires the regular comparison of expected and actual cash flows. Many insurers found this particularly challenging because of divergence between forecasts and recorded events, system limitations in capturing actual cash flows at required detail, and gaps in assumptions or actuarial models. Many insurers struggled with reconciling differences and identifying root causes, especially where granular actual data did not match the original forecast structure. This caused increased volatility in reported earnings and placed an additional strain on actuarial and finance functions to produce accurate, timely analyses.

In Europe and Asia, insurers deployed automated actuarial engines and machine learning tools to enhance the speed and accuracy of their cash flow analysis. This is an opportunity for Kenyan insurers going forward.

Integration Across Actuarial, Risk, and Finance Functions

IFRS 17 forced functions that traditionally worked independently—actuarial, risk, finance, and IT— to integrate their models, data flows, and reporting timelines. Many insurers experienced misaligned assumptions and definitions, inconsistent timing of inputs, and difficulty synchronizing model outputs.

Bridging operational silos requires considerable change management and cross-functional coordination.

Leading insurers globally are moving toward Integrated Finance and Risk Architectures (IFRA), where actuarial and finance models sit on shared platforms.

New Performance Metrics

IFRS 17 introduced new concepts such as Contractual Service Margin (CSM), Insurance Revenue, Insurance Service Result among others making historical comparisons problematic. Explaining the new measures to boards, analysts, and investors required extensive communication efforts and many companies had to revise internal performance dashboards and incentive structures to reflect the new standard.

Reports by Willis Towers Watson (WTW) and KPMG show that globally, insurers are still evolving their understanding of IFRS 17, with many moving to multi-year planning models to explain emerging profitability.

Traceability and Auditability

IFRS17 requires traceability across data flows—from source systems through to final financial statements. This posed a major challenge during implementation due to limited audit trails, gaps in documentation and system integration which hindered the ability to trace reported figures back to original policy-level inputs and assumptions. Auditors raised concerns around data lineage, prompting urgent efforts to enhance workflow tracking, implement reconciliation controls, and establish stronger documentation protocols.

From Compliance to Strategic Value

Despite its operational complexities, IFRS 17 presents a long-term opportunity for Kenya's insurance sector. It is evolving beyond compliance into a strategic tool for transparency, risk intelligence, and sustainable financial strength. Insurers that shift from bare minimum compliance to full optimisation position themselves to gain a competitive edge in an increasingly complex regulatory environment.

Unlocking this strategic value will require system upgrades and greater automation through integrated actuarial, finance, and reporting platforms. It will also demand the dismantling of functional silos to create stronger alignment across teams, enabling richer analytics, improved scenario modelling, and faster decision-making. Continuous capacity building across boards, sales and distribution teams, analysts, and investor relations will be essential to fully embed IFRS 17.

The Regulator is expected to continue offering guidance as the industry prepares for the introduction of IFRS S1 and S2, which focus on sustainability-related financial disclosures. These standards will strengthen the connection between financial reporting, risk exposures, and climate-related insights—areas where insurers must begin building readiness today.

This article was adopted from AKI's 2024 Insurance Industry market Report



A SOCIAL MEDIA CHEAT SHEET FOR INSURERS

By Moses Kemibaro

Kenya's insurance industry is at a definitive crossroads. For decades, it has relied heavily on traditional models of distribution—physical branches, insurance agents, and paper-heavy underwriting processes. Today, consumer behavior has shifted irrevocably. We are now living in a digital-first context, a reality accelerated by a surge in smartphones, the ubiquity of high-speed mobile internet, and a tech-savvy, and connected primary demographic.

Leveraging social media is not a question of presence versus absence. "Leveraging" implies a deliberate results-driven approach to drive core business objectives—a shift from digital existence to digital excellence. To truly leverage social media, insurers must align with the key drivers of engagement, as follows:

- **Simplicity:** The insurance industry is notorious for jargon. On social media, complexity is a barrier to entry.
- **Social Currency:** This refers to the ability to tap into existing conversations or create new ones. It is about relevance. Are you adding value to cultural, social and economic conversations online?
- **Emotion:** Insurance is inherently emotional—protection, fear of loss, and hope for the future. The industry must steer away from sterile and transactional messaging and embrace emotion.

The Local Context: A Market Ripe for Disruption

Insurance penetration in Kenya remains stubbornly below 3%, significantly lower than the global average of 7.2%. Digital platforms, particularly social media, offer a way to democratize access to information and products. Furthermore, the rise of the digital economy has birthed new risks—cybercrime, gig economy vulnerabilities, and digital asset theft—which require new insurance solutions. Products like NCBA Insurance's CyberGuard underscore this shift.

The foundation of digital marketing is access. In Kenya, the mobile phone is the primary gateway to the internet. Available data says there are over 24 million Kenyans online today with over 15 million social media identities.

The implication is profound: 90% of internet subscriptions in Kenya are mobile based. If an insurance company's digital assets—websites, portals, claim forms, and content—are not optimized for mobile, they are effectively invisible to the vast majority of the population. The consumer journey does not begin in a branch office; it begins on a 6-inch screen. The Video Imperative: In Kenya, 94.5% of internet users watch online video content weekly. Insurers must catch up. Kenyans are prolific users of social media with an average daily usage time of 4 hours. This is not passive consumption; it is active engagement.

Platform Dominance



The de facto operating system of communication in Kenya. It has evolved from a messaging app to a vital business tool. For insurance agents, WhatsApp is the new CRM, the new call center, and the new brochure.

87.8%



TikTok has exploded for a reason. It is a search engine and an edutainment platform.

78.3%



The "blue app" remains the leader for mass reach and community building, particularly for the middle aged demographic which is a prime target for insurance products.

75.9%



The visual storefront, essential for lifestyle brands and humanizing corporate entities through high quality imagery and stories.

70.9%



The boardroom of the digital-first business customer. For B2B insurance, group schemes, and professional indemnity, this is the premium channel for decision-makers.

31.4%

Strategy Moving Beyond "Posting"

A common pitfall for most businesses is the "tactification" of social media—jumping straight to posting without a coherent strategy. There are numerous useful strategy frameworks for digital planning, I shall use SOSTAC® by PR Smith for illustration.

• Situation Analysis (Where are we now?)

Before an insurer can post, they must listen. Situation analysis involves a brutal audit of the current reality including Customer Insights, competitor analyses and an evaluation of internal capabilities.

• Objectives (Where do we want to be?)

Being on Facebook" is not an objective. Objectives must be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound).

• Strategy (How do we get there?)

This is the "Big Idea." For an insurer, the strategy might be "Humanizing Insurance which infers a shift from selling fear to showcasing positive emotional impact on real people.

• Tactics (The details)

This is where the rubber meets the road.

- **Content Plan:** A calendar defining what goes out on Monday (Motivation), Wednesday (Education), and Friday (Fun).

- **Platform Mix:** Using LinkedIn for thought leadership on risk management, and Instagram for showcasing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

• Action (Who does what?)

Execution requires clear roles. Who scripts the video? Who approves the compliance? Who responds to the angry comment at 8 PM on a Friday?

• Control (How do we monitor?)

If you can't measure it, you can't manage it. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) must move beyond "vanity metrics" (likes) to "value metrics" (leads generated, conversion rates, sentiment analysis).

Platform Deep Dive: The Right Tools for the Job

Not all social media platforms are created equal. Each has a unique culture, demographic, and utility. Insurers must tailor their approach to fit the "vibe" of the platform while maintaining brand integrity.

• LinkedIn: The Professional Trust Builder

LinkedIn is a goldmine for B2B marketing and Thought Leadership. Strategy: Optimize the Company Page to act as a resource hub, not a brochure. Share ideas and knowledge.

• Facebook: The Community Engine

At over 17 million users in Kenya, Facebook is the mass market channel. It is essential for B2C engagement.

• Instagram: The Visual Storyteller

Insurance is intangible, which makes it hard to visualize. Instagram forces insurers to get creative. High-quality imagery is non-negotiable. Use Stories for behind-the-scenes content ("Day in the life of a Claims Officer"). Use Reels for quick tips ("3 things to know about your car insurance").

Instagram is the natural home of influencer marketing. Partner with lifestyle creators to weave insurance into their narrative

• TikTok: The New Frontier of Edutainment

TikTok is a powerful platform for demystifying complex topics.

"Insurance Tok" is a real niche. Use skits, humor, and trending sounds to educate. Partner with content creators to integrate your messages into their content.

• Twitter (X): The Real-Time Pulse

Twitter is the town hall of Kenya (KOT - Kenyans on Twitter). It is where reputations are made and destroyed. Real-time customer service and crisis management is essential.

Active social listening is crucial. A complaint about a denied claim demands a response not silence.

Content Strategy: The Currency of Attention

In the digital economy, attention is the scarcest resource. To capture it, insurers must become media companies.

• The Content Matrix

We recommend a balanced content diet using the Rule of Thirds:

- * **Promotional (1/3):** Direct sales messages ("Get 10% off your motor cover"). This converts demand.
- * **Educational/Value (1/3):** Thought leadership, tips, and industry news. This builds trust.
- * **Personal/Social (1/3):** Culture, people, CSR, and fun. This builds likeability.

• Storytelling

Storytelling showcases the impact of insurance on people, it makes them the hero of the story not the insurance company.

• Repurposing Content

One piece of content can serve multiple channels. The "Content Waterfall" method ensures efficiency.

- * **Big Rock:** Record a 1-hour webinar on "SME Risk Management."
- * **Slices:** Cut it into ten 1-minute clips for TikTok and Reels.
- * **Written:** Transcribe it into a blog post and a LinkedIn article.
- * **Visual:** Create quote cards for Instagram and Twitter.
- * **Result:** One effort, dozens of pieces of content.

• Why Influencers Matter

Trust in institutions (including insurers) is often lower than trust in individuals. Influencers—content creators who have built loyal audiences—act as bridges.

* **Reach:** They access audiences that traditional media misses.

* **Relevance:** They create content in the language and style that their audience understands (e.g., Sheng, memes).

* **Resonance:** An endorsement from a trusted figure acts as social proof.

• Categories of Influencers

* **Mega Influencers** (e.g., Eric Omondi, Azziad): Massive reach, expensive, good for brand awareness campaigns.

* **Macro Influencers** (e.g., Maggy the w/o Njugush): Strong engagement, specific niches (lifestyle, parenting).

* **Micro-Influencers:** Smaller followings (10k-50k) but hyper-engaged. A financial advisor with 10k followers is more valuable to an insurer than a comedian with 1m followers, because the audience intent is aligned.

• Best Practices for Insurers

* **Co-Creation:** Let them tell the brand story in their own voice.

* **Long-term Partnerships:** One-off posts look transactional. Long-term ambassadorships build genuine association.

* **Performance Tracking:** Move beyond "likes." Use tracking codes and unique links to measure clicks, leads, and conversions generated by the influencer.

Generative AI can help develop copy, make video reels and design graphics but it is advisable to implement "Human in the Loop" protocols. AI drafts the content; a human expert reviews it for accuracy and compliance.

Data Privacy (ODPC)

The Data Protection Act (2019) is in full force. Insurers collect sensitive personal data (health, financial).

• **Compliance:** Marketing consent is mandatory. You cannot spam people on WhatsApp or email without their opt-in. "Buying databases" is illegal and reputational suicide.

• **Social Media:** Posting photos of clients (e.g., handing over a cheque) requires explicit consent.

Most insurers have successfully moved through the "Presence" phase (setting up accounts) and the "Broadcast" phase (posting ads). However, few have reached the "Engagement" and "Integration" phases where social media is a two-way street that drives core business logic.

What is next? The gaps are clear:

1. Customer Service: Response times on social media are still too slow compared to global standards.

2. Content: There is still too much "corporate speak" and stock photography. We need more local, authentic, video-first storytelling.

3. Sales Integration: Social selling is in its infancy. Agents are not yet fully empowered to use LinkedIn and WhatsApp as prospecting tools.

Social media is essential to modern customer engagement for any business.

The writer is the Founder and CEO of Dotsavvy

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NEVER SAY DIE: ANGELA KAMAU'S STORY



Angela Kamau (with red scarf) poses with her mentorship group during the Kenya Women in Insurance Inuka Graduation



With a career spanning over three decades, Angela Kamau has built a formidable legacy in the insurance industry across Kenya and Uganda. An accomplished practitioner and educator, she currently serves as the CEO of Corporate Insurance and holds key leadership roles at the Association of Kenya Insurers (AKI) as Deputy Chairman and Chair of the General Insurance Council. She sits on the Board of the Insurance Institute of Kenya (IIK) and serves in the Knowledge and Development Committee. She gives back as a mentor through the Kenya Women in Insurance mentorship programme, Inuka.

In this candid and edifying conversation with the AKI Journal, Angela reflects on her journey, leadership philosophy, and resilience. She recounts arriving in Uganda to learn that colleagues had quietly given her 30 days to fail. Instead, she stayed for five years and won their respect and friendship.

It is this quiet grit, adaptability, and people-centred leadership that has defined how Angela Kamau has not only survived, but thrived, in the insurance industry for over 30 years.



Take us back to the beginning — how did your journey lead you to where you are today?

My father had had some very bad experiences with insurance, when I told him I wanted to study accounts in university, he pushed me towards insurance to try and find out what this thing is about. So I did my degree in accounts and a diploma in insurance.

My first job was at Tausi Assurance, where, within three years, I was the assistant underwriting manager. I stayed there for 5 years.

When I started having my children, I stopped working for about eight years. When my last one was two years old, I was ready to get back into the market. It was very difficult for me, because I had lost eight years.

So, I went back to school to do a diploma in teaching and training. And one morning I walked into the College of Insurance determined to get a job. I get there. The lady at the reception asked me, what do you want? I said, I want to see the HR. She says, no, tell me what exactly you want and after some back and forth I tell her, fine, I'm here for a job. She picks up the phone, calls a lady, Mrs. Were and says the person you are looking for is here. And I was in class teaching that evening. I taught for six years and decided I needed to get back into mainstream corporate.

At the time, a job in Uganda was advertised. I applied, got the job and moved to Uganda for five years. I was heading a division that had about 13 brokers and 20 members of staff. So, we did our own underwriting, re-insurance and claims. I was also thrown into marketing, something I had never done and as an underwriter, that experience really helped me become an all-rounder.

Next, I was headhunted to join a dream team back in Kenya. I moved back and joined the underwriter as an Assistant GM-Marketing. After 5 years, the same placement organization called me and asked if I was ready to move. I said yes. I joined Corporate Insurance as the General Manager and understudy to the MD with the intention of stepping into the role in a few years.

Unfortunately, within a year and a half of being there, I lost my husband. I was now the sole breadwinner, and I had to make a quick move to be able to support my family. Thankfully, I was headhunted as CEO of another underwriter. I joined them and led the team for seven years. And then Corporate Insurance came knocking again and I re-joined them one and a half years ago. That's been my journey.

Your family has been central to the career decisions you have made? Looking back what do you think about how things unfolded?

I don't know. I really questioned and beat myself up about going to Uganda because my children were very young. I think if I had to do it again, I would have moved with them. Though we are very close, I can still see the effects of my leaving them. It helps that they acknowledge that if I hadn't taken that drastic decision, I wouldn't have jump-started my career. That was one of the toughest decisions I've ever had to make.

Stepping into the CEO role comes with influence and responsibility. At this point in your life and career, what does it mean to you personally?

Responsibility. You oversee very many people. I don't mean just the employees. They have their families and dependents. You have responsibility because you are the face of the company. The responsibility of representing the organization at different levels.

So that responsibility sometimes can be overwhelming, and especially in an organization like this where I have found people I worked with before who believe you are this messiah. And when you hit walls, you can't go running to tell them you hit a wall.

I am grappling with making promises as a CEO. What happens when I cannot keep them? What then? In other instances, it's a good challenge. So, it depends on the situation at hand

Every career has highs, lows, and turning points. Which moments — the tough ones and the rewarding ones — have shaped the leader you've become?

Uganda was tough but the lowest is when I had to quit a job after working for three months. It was not easy. I had responsibilities, I had obligations. But the organization's values were just not aligning with mine. Yes, my home lost a paycheck, but I couldn't stay. And I am glad I left.

Rewarding moments, let give you three quick ones from different assignments.

In Uganda, I'm a foreigner. I don't speak the language and the mentality I find is what do you foreigners think you have that us locals don't? I am a day old, naive, and full of energy. I walk into the office and this young man who had been asked to take me through induction, asks "Angela, what are those marks on your desk?" I said, "I don't know. Two days later, there were some more marks on the table. "This looks like blood to me. Somebody's clearly welcoming you to Kampala" he says. I said, oh, okay I hadn't even thought about it like that.

I realized, if I'm going to manage this assignment, I need to be very wise about it. I had to learn the group dynamics, I realized there was one lady who everybody talked to. Even when they were doing something I told them to do, they went to find out from her if they could proceed.

I knew I needed to have her on my side if I was going to achieve anything. I took her for lunch, and I asked her one question, "Why didn't you take this role? Because clearly, these people listen to you, and you have what it takes". She was surprised by my candor, eventually she said she does not know. I told her that I needed her on my team if this assignment is to be a success so we had to see how best we could work together, "I'm Kenyan I must go home one day. And honestly, I think you should take this role if not a higher one" I said to her. And that was the only way I cracked that team. Because she became my flag bearer and champion. And we did so well. We became such good friends and still are to date. During my farewell, a team member said to me "Angela, we had made a pact. You were not going to last 30 days. Five years later, you are still here".

So, I was very proud about that one. That's when I learned that in the business of service, what matters is relationships.

When I came back to Kenya as part of a dream team of Assistant GMs. The organization was bleeding money at all levels. So, that first year was spent putting checks and balances. And a company that had been making losses began making profits. Not because we brought in new business. Just turning off the leakages. That's another moment I found really rewarding.

In another assignment, I joined as CEO and found that there were two companies in one. They operated separate bank accounts, sat in different locations and had different cultures. One of the things the board told me when I first joined them is that you need to bring these two units together in perception and reality. They must become one.

I started by looking at who was in management and who was second in line and made sure that, for instance, if there was a claims manager in section A the deputy came from side B and I mixed and matched them like that throughout. And then we started having management meetings where everybody comes. It was chaotic at first and in three years, we moved into one office and that's where the rubber met the road. But it worked out. And I think they're in a good place now.

What's the best piece of advice that you lean on, even today?

My boss in Uganda, Matthew Koech told me, if you are in an organization for seven years and you've not made any impact, it's time to leave. And within seven years, you should be able to have made an impact and give others a chance to come in and build and add value on what it is you've done.

I always remember that. And it gives me comfort when I need to move sometimes.

Do you have a leadership style?

I don't think I do. And I'll tell you why. Different situations call for different strategies.

There are times when decisions need to be made there and then, and I have had to do a lot of that recently. There are times when you need to be democratic and allow for discussion, especially where you need to change culture and build harmony.

While in Uganda, I became a servant, completely brought myself down to a certain point to ensure things worked.

So, for me it's situational.

What are your foundations, basically, enabling you to adapt to the situation that you're in?

People skills. It's reading who you're dealing with and figuring out how to achieve what it is you want to achieve. Because in the end, it's what you want to achieve. You want to get them to produce. You want to get them to move. You want to get them to improve themselves. It's just people skills.

It calls for a lot of wisdom. I keep telling people when I wake up in the morning, the first thing I ask God for is wisdom because dealing

with people can be draining and you meet them in all sorts and types. I appreciate that we are all different. There's that one who likes to fight. There's one who likes to scream and it's my job to get all of them to deliver.

Reading the room is especially useful for managing different generations. You may have a board who are pre-computers, baby boomers in senior management, millennial in middle management and Gen Z –it's a juggling act.

The other thing is networking. My stint at the College was very helpful because every office I walk into, I find someone I taught or trained. In Uganda, I also taught at the College and served at the industry association.

What kind of people do you like to surround yourself with?

People who see things differently from myself because. In leadership, there are times you think you have figured it all out and you know how it's supposed to be done. And honestly, there could be another way of doing it.

Sometimes I have very radical thoughts and it's good when you have somebody who can tell you, you know, how about this or that. And you know even in leadership, people think by saying yes, all the time, it's endearing you to them, but it could be detrimental to all of you. So, I like to see that other perspective. I may still do it the way I thought I should do it, but at least I have that other perspective in mind. I do this a lot with my children, and it works.

Let's talk about the industry. Where do you think the industry is right now? What's weighing it down? And what is the future?

I think the industry in Kenya is in a bit of a transition but a bit slower than we would have expected it to be.

Our industry is very interesting, we have very big players, then we have very small players, like us, and then we have the middle-sized players. And many players are struggling because the pie is still the same. But with the kind of regulation we have right now, that's going to change. And I think it's already changing just that it's very subtle.

What I see happening in the next 5 to 10 years, some companies will opt to specialize in business lines. So, for instance, we will have a company that specializes in marine or one that just does property, another one that does something else. Eventually, we will have a few giants that are able to have divisions of everything. And if at all we have many players, it will be line-based specialization. I think playing everywhere is going to be a tall order and we will see more acquisitions and mergers happening.

I also see the business becoming more retail than corporate. I think corporates will opt for self-insurance or fund management, a cheaper option for them. This is likely to shrink the brokerage function. Why? We have aggregators. My insurance will be on my phone. And the agents are coming at them, and it's not a level playing field.

The ecosystem may become more spread such that, for instance, I may be an underwriter, but I outsource my claims management to a third party. So, for instance, I could decide to just be a claim-settling

agent. I do foresee that kind of specialization likely to happen.

And then there's the digital change. I haven't been to my bank for four years, yet I have made every transaction I needed. Insurance will need to get to that level. And you see that's retail. It's not corporate. Remote work will become a reality we must contend with as an industry.

Is there a space or an area you think people are not paying enough attention to in the industry?

This one has been said so often, it sounds like a broken record, but Blue ocean. I mean, if our penetration is at 2.4% now, I think the problem lies in poor knowledge about insurance. But nobody wants to take responsibility. Is it going to be AKI? Is it going to be IIK? Is it going to be the regulator? Is it going to be insurance companies? Who's going to educate people about insurance? Who's going to increase the outreach? I mean, you can't have it shrinking. It should be increasing. I think the issue is we are not concentrating on that, especially us in the corporates.

We are also guilty of recycling business. It moves from company A, goes to company B and that keeps us going. The effect is the pie remains the same or even shrinks, and the industry does not grow.

How does Gen Z factor into growing the pie?

Insurance on my phone and innovation for things that I hold dear. The value system for Gen Zs, is not like ours, so I think an aspect of micro insurance is what will work. They are not interested in owning houses, even cars don't appeal to them. Uber works just fine for most. So, we need to rethink because in many ways, traditional covers won't make sense for them.

And that's why I'm saying specialization will happen no matter what. I think someone tried insuring phones in the past. I think they should try again and do it differently. The only thing that brings us together, the whole of Kenya, is phones. So, if insurance is not accessible on the phone, it's not really available. Insurance needs to build on the mobile money revolution. No need to reinvent anything, just build on that. The day we are able to hack what the banks have done in that regard. Insurance will move.

We also need to work on our credibility. Have people out there speaking well about the industry. I lost my phone. I was sorted out within a day. I was travelling. I lost my laptop; within hours I was sorted.

If you could change anything about the industry what would it be?

Nationalize general insurance. I know its radical but I would do that. In India, until 1999, all insurance companies were nationalized, today its hybrid, but most companies remain nationalized and they do have a better performing industry than we do.

The first reason is the math doesn't add up. When you look at the number of registered vehicles and the number of people buying insurance, it doesn't add up and the gap is wide. If the government was the one that was in charge of that, every car would be insured.

Secondly, the cartels would be killed. The 'victims', the lawyers and ambulance chasers all that would be tamed. Because when you have an accident, the payout is well laid out in a schedule or guide. If you break your hand, this is what you are paid. You break your leg this is what you are supposed to be paid. I would honestly push for that to happen. Let it be a government institution with systems, so that we cut out going to court completely.

It's a bit radical but the truth is we have not hacked it. Half the reason some companies are struggling is because of people trying to take advantage of the situation. Run to a lawyer, get an award for something that maybe wasn't even supposed to be paid. Insurance fraud has become a business with fully fledged offices. Their main work is to create claims and make money. They have their people in the courts; they have lawyers and adjusters on their payroll.

I know we've been trying to get tribunals to handle insurance claims. My take is that the existing tribunal should be empowered to be able to handle all matters insurance where they will need to strike a balance between insurance practice and principles and the law.

If we nationalize, the government will make more money, because all the premiums will be paid to the government. It's a bit radical, but I think that's the only way to manage. At the moment, we can't price it right, we can't control the claims, and we can't control the stakeholders. So that would be my radical thing, make sure that all that is changed.

Who is Angela, outside the office?

I think you can already tell. My family.

I read plenty, normally three books at the same time, one in my bathroom, one next to my bed, one in the car. Currently reading George Orwell's 1984, Black Girls Must Die Exhausted by Jane Allen is in my bag right now and I am also reading Game of Thrones, courtesy of my children.

I have already started working on what will be my retirement plan which is formulation of soaps and creams for mature skin. You should see me in the lab with goggles looking like I am making a bomb!

I travel alone and with friends. Road trips are my favorite especially impromptu ones.

I am also doing Bible Study, it's my way of reading the Bible cover to cover. After that I hope to read the Quran, and the Gita, just for knowledge.

Business books?

Read enough of them. Self-help too. I love comedy, I think life has become too serious I want to laugh.

The Revolution will be underwritten:

By Felix Maundu



How AI is creating leaders and laggards

Imagine a claims adjuster in Nairobi receiving a motor accident report at 2 a.m. Instead of waiting until morning to dispatch a human assessor, an AI-powered system automatically analyses the submitted photos, cross-references geolocation data and historical patterns, estimates damage, and triggers an instant payout to the policyholder's M-Pesa wallet before sunrise. This is not science fiction but rapid response workflows that leading Kenyan insurers have already rolled out this year.

Across the region, artificial intelligence is no longer a buzzword on PowerPoint slides; it is quietly rewriting the entire insurance value chain.

Underwriting: From Gut Feeling to Precision Pricing

Kenyan and regional insurers are increasingly using alternative data like mobile money transaction histories, satellite imagery of farms, and weather patterns to underwrite risks that were previously uninsurable. Innovative Agri-insurance providers now assess crop risks for smallholder farmers in real time using AI models that analyze rainfall, soil moisture from satellites, and crop health indicators. What used to take weeks now takes seconds, dramatically expanding access to cover millions in the informal economy.

Customer Experience: Conversations, Not Forms

Chatbots have evolved into sophisticated virtual agents with the ability to speak Swahili, Sheng and other local languages. Leading insurers now handle the majority of routine inquiries via AI, while generative AI drafts personalized policy explanations in plain, everyday language, finally making insurance understandable for most Kenyans.

Claims Management: Where the Real Money Is Saved

This is where insurers are seeing the biggest impact. AI fraud detection models, trained via millions of historical claims, flag suspicious patterns with high accuracy. Industry reports show AI is helping reduce fraudulent payouts significantly while speeding up honest claims and, in some cases, cutting processing times dramatically and enabling proactive management that lowers overall costs by 15–30%.

Operations: The Invisible Transformation

Behind the scenes, robotic process automation combined with AI now handles the bulk of back-office tasks including policy renewals, premium allocation, commission calculations. What once required large teams to execute now runs more efficiently via AI, freeing staff to focus on complex risks and building genuine customer relationships.

The Skills Revolution

Companies that are leading AI are investing heavily in their people. In this new reality, data literacy is essential. Underwriters need to understand basic statistics to interpret AI recommendations. Customer-facing teams are learning “AI augmentation”: knowing exactly when to trust the machine and when human judgment and empathy must take over. Forward-thinking insurers have launched “AI champions”, where younger, tech-savvy staff mentor senior leaders — turning the traditional hierarchy upside down and energizing the whole organization.

The Guardrails We Urgently Need

AI carries real risks. Early AI models have sometimes shown bias — for example, disadvantaging women in informal trade because of shorter digital footprints. The Insurance Regulatory Authority (IRA) and regional counterparts must act quickly to put in place:

- Regular checks by outside experts to catch and fix any bias in AI pricing or claims decisions
- Ensure every customer gets a simple, clear explanation their pricing or why a claim was approved/rejected
- Strict laws to protect private data like M-Pesa records, health details, or car tracking data
- For big claims or life-changing decisions, a real person must always review what the AI says

Staying Ahead — or Being Left Behind

The gap is widening fast. Insurers that treat AI as a cost-cutting tool risk will become obsolete. However, those that use it to build trust through faster payouts, fairer pricing and true financial inclusion will shape the next decade.

The writer works in the ICT Department at Kenya Reinsurance Corporation Ltd

The Future Is Embedded:

By Bente Krogmann



Why Kenya's Digital credentials are a big opportunity for the insurance sector

Everyone in Kenya's insurance industry is waiting for 'IT' the idea or capability that sparks serious growth. Embedded insurance could be 'IT'.

Juxtapose insurance penetration, presently hovering just above 2% of GDP versus mobile and digital adoption- among the highest in Africa and it is clear that Kenya is perfectly placed to create a new kind of value.

This mix of unmet need and digital readiness is the foundation for a new model of protection; one that fits naturally into the way consumers already live, work and transact.

Embedded insurance, is protection that is built into another product or service and offered at the exact moment a customer needs it. To ensure efficiency, the offer is most often integrated seamlessly into a digital journey.

Instead of asking a boda rider to visit a branch to buy a personal accident policy, the cover can be bundled as a loyalty benefit when the rider purchases fuel. A traveller booking an air ticket can have travel insurance incorporated into the checkout process. And someone buying a new phone (whether in-store or online) can add device protection at the point of purchase with a single tap.

The policies are underwritten by a licensed insurer, while distribution happens through partners such as telcos, banks, retailers, transport platforms and utility providers. Through API integrations, the carrier's systems plug directly into the partner's platform; enabling effortless quotation, onboarding, payments and policy management.

Globally, embedded insurance is no longer a niche. While estimates vary based on methodology, they all point toward exponential growth. The Boston Consulting Group projects the market will rise from about USD 13 billion today to more than USD 70 billion in GWP by 2030. The World Economic Forum places the potential even higher, suggesting that in property and casualty alone, embedded

models could generate over USD 700 billion in premiums. The opportunity is undeniably massive.

Africa is already embracing embedded financial services. Estimates from Bain and Company and BFA Global show that Africa's embedded finance market is set to rise from around USD 11.9 billion in 2024 to USD 18 billion by 2030, with embedded insurance forming a growing share of that value.

Kenya's digital ecosystem strengthens this trajectory. Studies by GSMA and FSD Kenya consistently rank the country among Africa's leaders in mobile-money penetration, smartphone uptake, and digital commerce. These foundations place Kenya in a strong position to scale embedded insurance rapidly.

Embedded insurance benefits the entire ecosystem: Carriers, intermediaries, regulators, platforms and end-users.

For carriers, it opens new premium pools through partnerships reaching customers missed by traditional channels. Digital rails lower acquisition and servicing costs, while platform data improves pricing and speeds up claims.

For intermediaries, it creates new advisory roles. Brokers and agents help design appropriate products, structure partnerships and support compliance, adding value in a digital marketplace.

For regulators, it offers a scalable way to advance inclusion and strengthen consumer protection.

For partners, embedded protection enhances the core service boosting loyalty and differentiating customer experience.

And for end-users, it makes insurance simple, relevant and affordable. Protection is delivered at the moment of need!

At its core, embedded insurance is about meeting people where they are and protecting what matters most. Kenya's digital economy makes this possible at unprecedented scale. The ecosystem is ready, the technology is mature, and the demand is clear.

The players who are moving now will shape the market for the next decade.

The writer is the CEO at mTek

Future proofing insurance

By Iara Sousa

How IFRS S1 and S2 will catalyze Holistic Risk Management across the Insurance Industry



*i*magine an insurance executive in Maputo, Mozambique, in the 1990s, sitting in a modest office reviewing last year's claims by hand. Back then, the world felt, and was relatively predictable. Disasters were intermittent, if yesterday was calm, it was easy to assume tomorrow would be the same. Pricing policies relied heavily on decades of historical loss data.

Today that assumption no longer holds. Storms are more intense, floods are more frequent, and losses previously deemed "once in a century" are now occurring with alarming regularity. In fact, global insured losses from natural catastrophes now routinely top \$100 billion each year.

Across Africa, climate-related hazards are increasing in both frequency and severity, amplifying the risks communities face. The world that insurers must prepare for looks nothing like the one reflected in old claim ledgers.

This shift is what the new IFRS S1 and IFRS S2 standards aim to address. Issued in 2023 by the International Sustainability Standards Board, these standards represent more than a new reporting requirement. They signal a fundamental change in how insurers are understand risk, value their exposures, and plan for the future. IFRS S1 and S2 compel insurers to adopt a forward-looking mind-set, from analysing yesterday's threats to anticipating tomorrow's risks.

A New Lens on Future Risks

IFRS S1 (General Requirements for Sustainability-Related Disclosures) now requires insurers to disclose how sustainability-related risks and opportunities affect their financial position, performance, and long-term strategy. In short sustainability is a part of core financial reporting, treated as a material financial risk that executives must reckon with in business plans and capital decisions, not in a separate corporate responsibility report.

IFRS S2 (Climate-Related Disclosures) takes this a step further by applying that logic specifically to climate change. It requires insurers to assess and disclose how climate-related risks from worsening floods and cyclones to carbon transition shocks could influence their underwriting losses, claims volatility, capital adequacy, and reinsurance needs under different future climate scenarios. In practice, insurers must now confront forward-looking questions such as:

- *How would a 1.5°C warming scenario versus a 3°C scenario affect our portfolio's loss ratios and profitability?*
- *What are the implications of more frequent extreme weather for our capital buffers, or for how much reinsurance protection we purchase?*

- *How resilient is our current business model if climate shocks become non-linear, for example, if multiple severe disasters strike in quick succession?*

These questions force a decisive shift from relying solely on historical averages to incorporating scientific projections and scenario analysis. By mandating scenario analyses, IFRS S2 ensures imagining “what if” becomes routine as reporting. This new lens on the future gives investors, regulators, and the insurers themselves a clearer view of how tomorrow’s climate might impact today’s decisions. It’s a profound change: where once an insurer’s risk view was mainly in the rear-view mirror, now it must also be through the windshield.

Why It Matters for African Insurers

Africa is on the front lines of climate change, and the stakes for insurers here are especially high. In developing countries (many of them in Africa), over 90% of disaster losses are not covered by insurance. This protection gap means that when extreme floods, droughts, or cyclones hit, the brunt of the cost is not absorbed by insurance and instead falls on governments, communities and households. For example, in 2019, Cyclone Idai caused catastrophic damage across Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Malawi, with estimated economic losses of at least USD \$2 billion, yet only about 7% of those losses were insured. More than nine-tenths of the reconstruction and recovery had to be financed without insurance pay-outs.

Under IFRS S2, an insurer in Kenya or Nigeria must ask: Where are our most significant climate-related vulnerabilities? Are certain regions or lines of business likely to see surging claims in a 2°C+ world? Such analysis can highlight where solvency pressures might intensify as disasters mount. It can reveal where today’s pricing or reserves may prove inadequate tomorrow, and thus where premium rates or capital buffers need bolstering. It also highlights where current reinsurance programs might fall short if extreme events become more common, encouraging insurers to strengthen their protection or explore innovative risk transfer mechanisms (such as parametric covers or regional risk pools).

This shift can illuminate opportunities, for instance, identifying markets or communities where new climate-responsive insurance products are needed to close the protection gap. For African insurers, this is not just about compliance; it’s about future-proofing business in a region where the climate will test the resilience of every strategy.

Toward a Resilient Insurance Sector

At their core, IFRS S1 and S2 strengthen the insurance sector’s ability to fulfil its fundamental triple role in society as risk carriers, risk managers, and long-term investors. Robust climate-risk disclosure can reinforce each of these roles.

- **Risk Carriers:** Companies will price risks more accurately and set aside adequate reserves for extreme events. This means fewer unpleasant surprises and a reduced chance that a spike in claims will threaten an insurer’s solvency
- **Risk Managers:** By identifying material climate risks earlier, insurers can work with clients and governments to reduce those risks upfront. For example, if scenarios show a mounting flood risk, insurers might advocate for stronger building codes, finance community risk awareness, or incentivise policyholders to relocate from high-risk zones.
- **Long-Term Investors:** Insurance companies manage enormous investment portfolios. Clear visibility of climate-related risks (as required by these standards) will encourage insurers to shift their capital toward projects that thrive in a low-carbon,

climate-changed future. This could mean investing in renewable energy, sustainable transportation, or climate-resilient infrastructure instead of doubling down on carbon-intensive or vulnerable assets.

IFRS S1 and S2 is nudging the insurance sector toward what the UNEP Finance Initiative calls “Insurance for Sustainable Development,” an industry that actively helps society adapt to climate change and reduce future losses, while staying financially sound.

Compliance as a Strategic Opportunity

There are those who worry IFRS S1 and S2 compliance will result in heavy administrative costs. Obviously building the systems to gather climate data, model scenarios, and produce detailed reports will require resources. However, strong sustainability and climate disclosure can confer competitive advantages. Studies have found that following Taskforce on Climate related Financial Disclosures (TCFD)-aligned disclosure practices “facilitates easier access to capital by increasing investors and lenders’ confidence” that a company’s climate risks are being adequately handled.

Similarly, reinsurers that provide backup coverage to primary insurers are closely monitoring how their ceding companies address climate threats. An African insurer that can show, through IFRS S2 disclosures, a clear handle on its exposure to floods or droughts might gain stronger relationships with reinsurers, securing better terms or higher coverage limits. Regulators too, are increasingly viewing rigorous climate disclosure as a sign of prudent governance, which could translate into a more favourable regulatory stance or at least less uncertainty during supervisory reviews.

For African insurers, embracing these standards could unlock several opportunities that go beyond mere compliance like Accessing international climate finance: (like the Green Climate Fund or development bank programs), Strengthening public-private partnerships, enhancing market reputation and Innovating products for emerging risks.

The Road Ahead

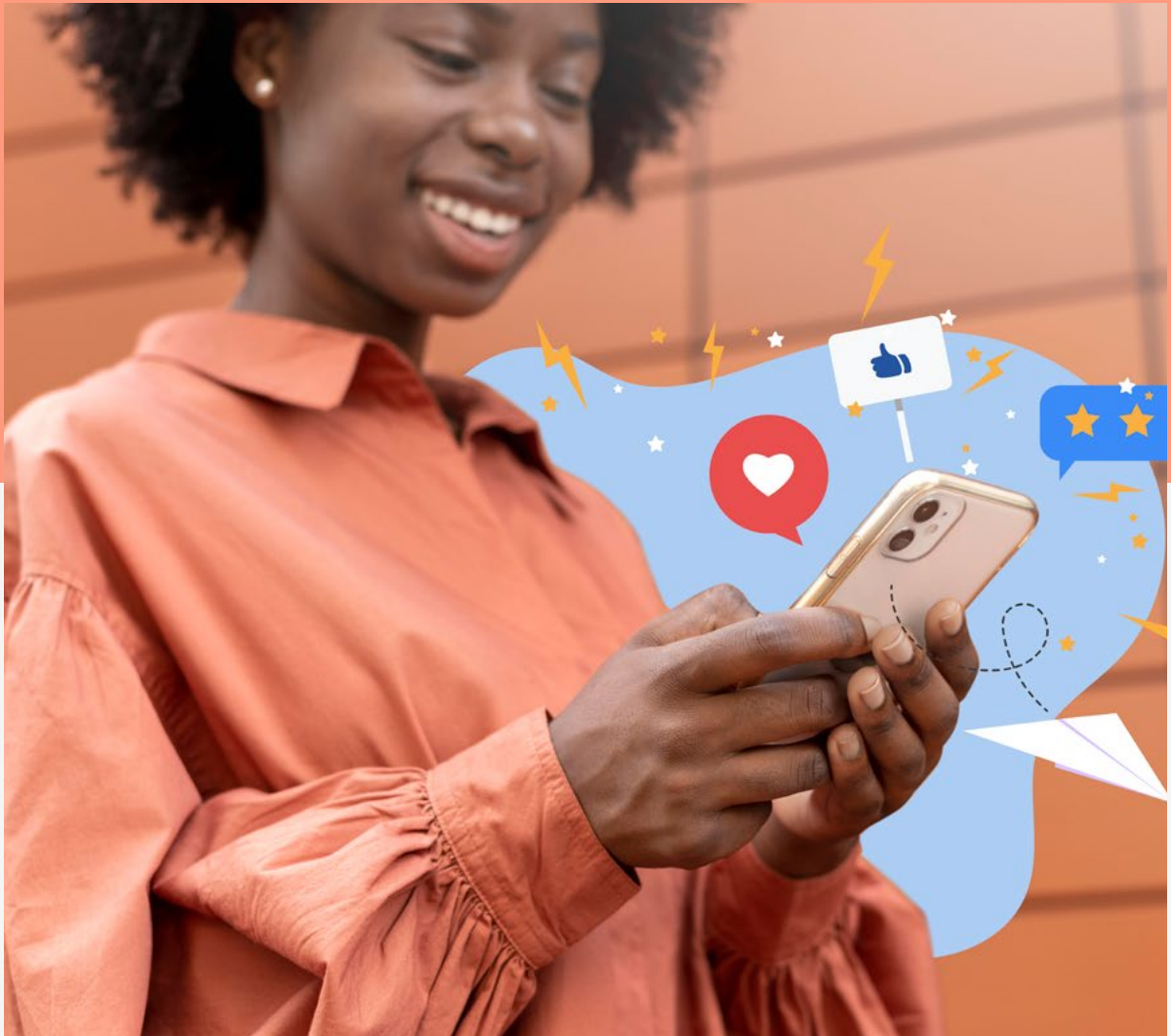
Implementing these new standards will not happen overnight. Insurers will need to invest in better climate and catastrophe data systems, ensuring they have access to high-quality hazard maps, weather trend statistics, and predictive models. They will also need to strengthen board-level governance around sustainability.

These investments are significant, but the payoff is a more robust insurance sector that is aligned with the realities of a changing climate.

Insurers that cling to old assumptions may find themselves facing surprises, such as surges in claims, stressed capital, or even withdrawal of reinsurance support, threatening their viability. Conversely, insurers that adapt their risk frameworks and business models to anticipate these changes will bolster their long-term resilience and relevance.

In the 1990s, you could afford to use yesterday to predict tomorrow. Today, that approach is a liability. IFRS S1 and S2 effectively offer insurers a new compass, a way to navigate uncertainty by looking ahead at multiple possible futures and preparing for them. These standards ensure that the insurance industry plays a pivotal role in helping society weather the storms to come.

The Writer is a Manager on Sustainable Insurance at FSD Africa



INSURANCE ISN'T THE PROBLEM

THE EXPERIENCE IS

By Jane Ngugi

WALK INTO...

...any insurance branch in Kenya today, or visit an insurer's website for the first time, and you will notice that while the products have evolved, the customer experience feels stuck in a past era.

Many clients walk away from insurers because their first interaction leaves them confused, overwhelmed/ underwhelmed or unsure of what they have signed up for and not because the product lacks value.

This begs an essential question: Are we genuinely aligned with our customers' expectations, behavior, and lived experiences?

First impressions

For most Kenyans, the first contact with insurance is triggered by a necessity; a loan requirement, a medical emergency, or the purchase of a new car. These are moments that carry emotional weight, and ideally, insurers should offer clarity and reassurance. Unfortunately too often, the introduction is clouded by technical jargon, complex explanations, or product brochures that feel more transactional than human. Customers crave understanding, not terminology. The tone we use, historically formal and compliance-driven, can unintentionally push people away rather than build confidence.

A first interaction should make insurance feel accessible, not intimidating.

Onboarding: Clarity, Not Complexity

Once the customer agrees to buy a policy, the onboarding process becomes the next hurdle. Long forms, technical language in policy documents, and unfriendly digital interfaces create friction in what should be a seamless journey. In a world where investments, shopping, and even medical consultations can be completed in minutes on a smartphone, insurance onboarding should feel like assistance, not a test of endurance. We need simple language, visual guides, shorter forms, and interactive digital journeys.

Accessibility and responsiveness

Modern customers expect more than physical presence. They expect that technology will simplify the process, not complicate it. They want responsiveness, convenient digital access, and timely feedback.

Many insurers have adopted websites, chatbots, and mobile apps which is commendable but accessibility also means:

- Not waiting days for a policy update
- Not being transferred from one department to another
- Being understood and responded to with empathy

Short-Term vs Long-Term Products

Customers experience different types of insurance in different ways.

- **Short-term products** like motor or medical insurance are often viewed as necessities. Speed, accuracy, and ease of renewal are everything.
- **Long-term products** such as education or life policies require reassurance, regular engagement, and trust-building over time.

Yet communication across these product types often looks identical. Tailored engagement based on the emotional nature of the product is no longer optional; it is expected.

Human touch and technology

The Insurance sector has undergone a digital transformation. However, efficiency must never come at the cost of human warmth. A hybrid model; technology for convenience, people for empathy can facilitate meaningful experiences. Customers want answers quickly, but they also want to feel heard.

We Sell Well — But Do We Educate Well?

Insurance literacy remains a gap. Many policyholders do not fully understand their cover, exclusions, or the claims process.

This is where multi-channel communication strategies hold great power: social media explainers, newsletters, educational videos, community engagement, and webinars. Education is a continuous dialogue not a one-off pitch.

Claims: The Ultimate Moment of Truth

Claims are the point where promises become reality. When delays, unclear instructions, or excessive paperwork dominate the claims journey, trust erodes quickly. However, when claims are handled with empathy, transparency, and speed, customer loyalty strengthens instantly.

Proactive updates and clear requirements transform claims from frustrating transactions into powerful relationship-building moments.

Customer alignment is a daily commitment

Customer experience is no longer about products — it's about emotions, journeys, and trust. Every interaction, from first contact to claims settlement, shapes perception.

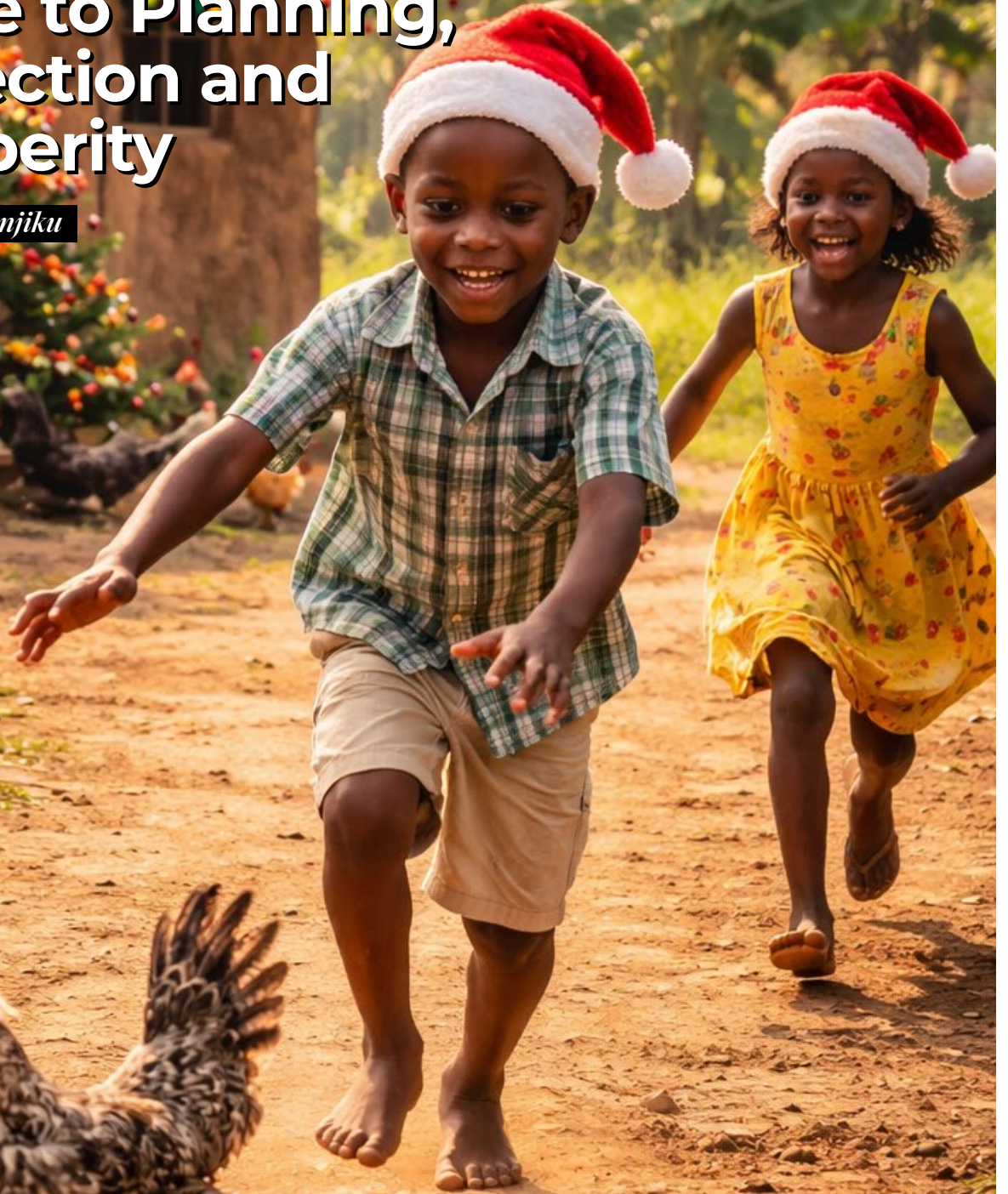
To truly align with our customers, we must evolve from providing insurance to building confidence, demystifying the process, and nurturing relationships.

Insurance isn't just about risk. It's about people. And when we put people at the center, alignment becomes not just possible — but inevitable.

The writer is the Assistant Manager, Marketing and Alternative Distribution Channels at Kenya Orient Insurance

Financial Stability in the Festive Season and beyond: A Kenyan Guide to Planning, Protection and Prosperity

By Susan Wanjiku





December in Kenya has a distinct rhythm. It is a season of celebration, family gatherings, travel, and weddings. It is also a period of heightened spending.

December energy is joyful, but the reality is financially demanding and every year many households fall into the same pattern: festive overspending, then scrambling through January. But the issue is not December itself, it is the absence of a structured financial system to support your life throughout the year. December simply exposes what happens when money management is reactive instead of intentional. Research by FSD Kenya shows that over 60% of Kenyans experience cash-flow strain in January, due to December overspending and lack of structured planning. This is not a personal failure—it is a systems issue.

In my work as a personal finance coach, I have seen this pattern repeat itself across all income levels. The households that experience the least financial stress are not the ones that earn the most; it is the ones with predictable systems, firm boundaries, and adequate protection.

The financial psychology at play during the festive season involves five elements.

- a) Cultural expectations and the spirit of generosity-** African culture values giving but unplanned giving quickly becomes a financial burden.
- b) The “reward yourself” effect-**After a tough year, many feel overspending is justified to compensate for stress endured throughout the year.
- c) Social comparison -** End-year holidays, outfits, trips, parties... create a pressure to match our peers.
- d) Black tax surges-**Requests for help tend to spike in December, stretching budgets beyond what’s sustainable.
- e) Lack of buffers-**Without savings and insurance, one emergency can collapse the entire financial plans for the coming year.

A December budget alone is not a sustainable solution. What you need is a 12-month system suited to the Kenyan economy. When you know what your year looks like, surprises reduce dramatically. This is a sample calendar that many can relate with.

- January: school fees
- February: rent increment reviews
- April: Easter travel and family gatherings
- June–July: medical expenses increase due to cold season
- August: weddings, rurocios, fundraisers
- September: second school fees cycle
- November: insurance renewals
- December: gifts, travel, celebrations

After listing your expenses, map out your: high-income months, low-income months and Bonus/commission month then build a system that ensures the high months support the low ones.

Three-Key-Accounts Saving Structure

Emergency Fund vs. Sinking Fund-These two are often confused, yet they serve very different purposes:

- **Emergency Fund:** for unexpected expenses (car breakdowns, medical needs, job loss)
- **Sinking Fund:** for expected expenses (school fees, holidays, gifts, annual insurance premiums)

These two should be in a Money Market Fund; two separate money market funds. You don’t want to mix your Emergency Fund with any other savings.

Then add:

- **Long-Term Savings & Investing** – for wealth creation. You cannot save your way to wealth; investment is the only the way to build wealth in the long-term. Households that use this structure almost never experience financial chaos in January.

The Festive Season Framework: Plan, Protect, Prosper

1. PLAN – Budget + Boundaries

Plan your December spending in advance.

- Set clear limits for gifting, travel, and celebrations
- Allocate a “contribution allowance” for expected December requests
- Have honest conversations with family about what you can and cannot do
- Avoid funding December with digital loans or credit cards

2. PROTECT – Insurance as the Stability Engine

Insurance is a planning and protection tool that transforms financial uncertainty into stability. And it’s the fine line between those who are completely obliterated by life’s curveballs, and those who survive against all odds.

Always try to prioritize:

- Medical insurance – Because most Kenyan households are one illness away from bankruptcy
- Whole life insurance: Which helps you protect your vulnerable dependents in the case of your death, but also is one of the most affordable and predictable ways to leave your children a cash inheritance
- Critical Illness & Accidental Disability Covers: To replace your income in the case that a disability or a critical illness renders you economically unproductive and vulnerable due to the hefty bills and sudden lifestyle change and impact from an illness

3. PROSPER – Begin January with Structure

The goal is not to survive December, it is to enter January confidently.

Set yourself up by:

- Starting your 2026 sinking funds in January
- Automating savings and investment contributions
- Scheduling your annual insurance review
- Treating school fees as a 12-month responsibility, not a crisis

Prosperity is built quietly, consistently, and intentionally, not emotionally.

A New December Mindset for Kenyan Households

“January blues” are not an economic destiny. They are the predictable consequence of planning late, spending reactively, and living without financial protection.

In my work as a coach, I’ve learned that the biggest financial breakthroughs don’t come from earning more, but from creating structure, setting boundaries, and protecting your life from avoidable shocks.

Let this be December and January that you rewrite your financial story.

The writer is a Financial Coach at The Legacy Hub



The Rethink: Cracking MSME Insurance

By Hazel King'ori



By Jane Njagi

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMES) are the economic backbone of the global economy; they drive growth, employment and innovation.

According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) account for about 40% of Kenya's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employ approximately 14.9 to 15 million people across various sectors. Despite this significant economic contribution, the insurance use by this segment is extremely low. Majority of SMES remain highly exposed to risks.

This is partly because MSMEs are overlooked by banks and insurers, who prefer to target larger corporate businesses. Even alternative financial institutions, such as Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) and SACCOs— fail to meet all the needs of the MSME market.

Given its economic significance, the MSME sector is a promising market for insurers. However, several key challenges exist.

Firstly, insurance companies are hesitant to enter the MSME market because of their own lack of experience and data on this market. The high level of informality among MSMEs makes it difficult for insurers to find reliable data on the MSME segment.

“When insurers cannot distinguish between good and bad risks, they tend to avoid this market. Even when insurance is available, the fear of adverse selection and moral hazard, and the costs of mitigating it, results in rationing.” The IAIS Issues Paper on Microinsurance (2007).

The second challenge is the MSME's lack of experience and knowledge of risk management, and insurance products. This lack of understanding on both sides creates a product development gap.

Thirdly, MSMEs differ vastly based on size, age, sector and a multiplicity of other factors. Therefore, disaggregation is crucial to understanding the risks, needs and contextual realities of different MSMEs. It is challenging but essential to strike the right balance between standardized and tailor-made insurance products.

Lastly, once a product is designed, insurers still have the hurdle of building the right distribution strategy to get it into the hands of clients, providing post-sale service, and collecting premiums.

Insurance market actors, including providers, regulators and development partners need to rethink how to deliver MSME insurance because current approaches have proven ineffectual. Considering the above challenges obstacles, three areas of opportunities have emerged for insurance providers.

Deepen the understanding of MSMEs and their needs.

Improving insurance provision for MSMEs begins with a deep understanding of their needs, risks, and operating realities. While customer-centricity is essential across all insurance markets, MSMEs present a more complex challenge due to their diversity, requiring a more nuanced and segmented approach.

Traditional size-based definitions, often based on employee numbers and annual turnover, are limited in capturing meaningful differences in risk and insurance needs. Enterprises with similar employee counts and turnover can face vastly different realities, making such classifications ineffective for product design.

Disaggregation by economic activity is critical. MSMEs operate across diverse sectors with fundamentally different risk profiles. Insurance solutions are most effective when designed for specific sectors or value chains, where businesses face similar risks and can be reached through existing aggregation structures.

Further, more nuanced segmentation distinguishes between survivalist and aspirational enterprises. Survivalist businesses, which make up the majority of MSMEs in developing economies, primarily exist to sustain livelihoods and often have insurance needs like individuals. Aspirational enterprises, by contrast, are

growth-oriented, better distinguish between personal and business risks, and require more tailored, enterprise-specific insurance solutions.

Offer risk management and risk transfer solutions

While insurance is a valuable tool for building enterprise resilience, it cannot fully address the wide range of risks faced by MSMEs. Low uptake and limited trust in insurance are a key challenge.

Adopting a more holistic approach to risk can significantly strengthen insurance solutions. Supporting enterprises with risk assessment, prevention, and mitigation measures can create greater value and make insurance offerings more tangible and relevant. New technologies such as IOT sensors and apps, make these types of offerings increasingly feasible to incorporate and offer a win-win, comprehensive, practical, and value-driven solutions.

Lumkani in South Africa provides a valuable example. They distribute inclusive funeral and fire insurance underwritten by Hollard. To reduce fire risk, Lumkani provides early-warning fire sensors designed as heat detectors rather than conventional smoke alarms. When triggered, the device alerts occupants immediately and, within 20 seconds, signals nearby devices to activate a community-wide response. This approach not only mitigates fire risk but also delivers tangible value, particularly for market-based MSMEs.

Strategic partnerships with aligned incentives are key

MSMEs are too small to individually constitute a sustainable business case for insurers. As a result, it is vital to segment MSMEs on shared characteristics that translate into similar risk profiles.

Reaching these segments effectively often depends on partnerships with organisations that already aggregate MSMEs and have frequent interactions with them. Potential distribution partners include financial institutions, suppliers, buyers, cooperatives, agent networks, business associations, government and digital platforms. Each channel offers distinct opportunities and challenges. For instance, suppliers and cooperatives can facilitate premium and claims payments through existing financial transactions but may require training to build insurance understanding and avoid mis-selling

Partnerships with financial institutions are the most common model, given their familiarity with MSMEs' financial profiles and their ability to manage payments. However, financial institutions often segment MSMEs broadly and may lack deep insurance expertise, limiting the effectiveness of more comprehensive insurance solutions.

Overall, insurer-partner collaborations work best when structured as true partnerships with aligned incentives that add value to both parties' core businesses. Experience shows that identifying the right distribution partner remains one of the biggest challenges in MSME insurance, and that commission income alone is rarely sufficient to sustain successful, long-term partnerships.

The writer is the Manager, PR, Research & Education at Association of Kenya Insurers

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BOOK REVIEW

FINDING MY IKIGAI:

THE JAPANESE SECRET TO A LONG AND HAPPY LIFE

Review By Serah Mathenge

“Question.

What if the secret to a longer, happier life was hidden in the small, everyday choices you already make?”

I often feel that quiet tug between restlessness and curiosity, that small voice asking if there is more to life; why we push so hard, where it's all headed and whether I am really on the right path.

Ikigai: The Japanese Secret to a Long and Happy Life explores this restless tension with warmth and clarity. Ikigai is a Japanese word that means “a reason for being.”

Ikigai sits at the intersection of four questions: What do you love? What are you good at? What does the world need? And what can sustain you?

In theory it sounds simple, yet the impact of living in alignment with your Ikigai is potentially profound. The book insists that purpose is not just about personal happiness, but about creating a life of intention, connection, and meaning.

Through stories from Okinawa, home to some of the world's longest-living people, the book shows that fulfillment is not found in sudden changes or huge achievements. It grows quietly through small, everyday habits: tending a garden, taking morning walks, nurturing friendships, and engaging in work that matters. These routines, grounded in presence and mindfulness, teach us that joy and purpose can be cultivated slowly, often in the ordinary moments we might overlook.

What makes Ikigai feel so genuine is its simplicity. It does not offer a rigid formula or promise instant transformation. Instead, it encourages reflection, listening to your own intuition, and exploring what resonates personally. Purpose, the book reminds us, is not a finish line; it's something we practice daily. In a world that constantly urges us to move faster, achieve more, and compare ourselves to others, Ikigai offers the rare permission to slow down, notice life, and nurture what really matters.

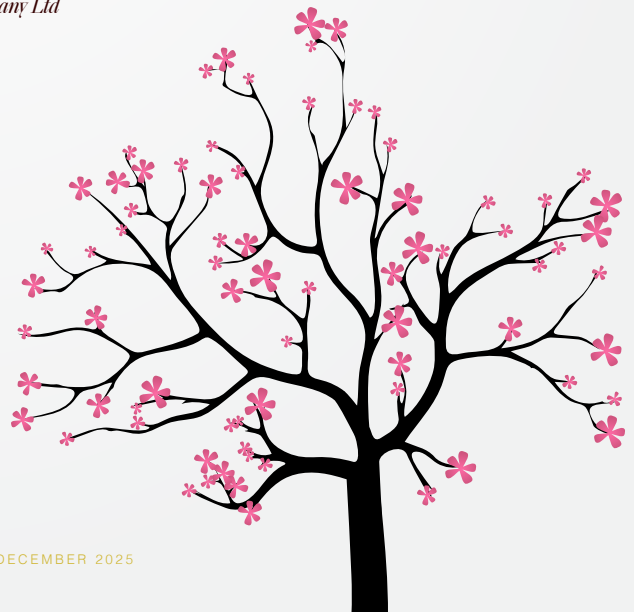
Reading Ikigai feels like a gentle nudge to live intentionally. It asks you to pay attention to the people, passions, and routines that bring meaning to your days and to cultivate joy deliberately. Whether you are at a crossroads, searching for direction, or simply curious about living more intentionally, the book gives insights that are practical, poetic, and deeply human.

Over time, I have realized that when I focus on what truly matters to me, life feels lighter and more alive. My intuition and curiosity have quietly become my guides, leading me toward my ikigai. And when I find it, I want to honor it, nurture it, and let it make a difference.

As Mitsuo Aida said, “Here. Now.” Amid all the uncertainty, I choose to show up with gratitude, presence, and joy.

This book above all reminds me that fulfillment is not found in distant milestones but everyday practices, in the here and now.

The reviewer is a Business Development Officer at ICEA LION General Insurance Company Ltd





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