

# JAPAN, UGANDA TECH FIRMS SIGN DEAL TARGETING SOFTWARE ENGINEERING JOBS

By Ali Twaha

Japanese firm Akademia Limited and Uganda's Maarifasasa Limited have signed a strategic technology partnership aimed at opening up to 10,000 offshore software engineering opportunities for Ugandan developers.

The company representatives said the agreement seeks to plug Japan's growing tech talent shortage while lifting local engineers into global markets.

The agreement, signed under the UJ-Connect initiative backed by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Uganda's ICT ministry, sets up joint AI-enabled multilingual Agile software development and offshore engineering services delivered from Uganda to Japanese clients.

## FIGHTING TECH UNDEREMPLOYMENT

Robert Bob Okello, founder at Maarifasasa Limited, said the partnership directly targets Uganda's widespread underemployment among

## BETWEEN THE LINES

◀ The partnership is designed to connect Uganda's young English-speaking workforce with Japan's tightening technology labour market.

software developers.

"We actually have quite a few local talents, but the quality of opportunities that are available for them right now is quite low. We have a lot of underemployment when it comes to our tech and engineering talent here," Okello said during the press conference on Thursday in Kampala.

"Most people actually have the skills to do so much more, but the opportunity for them to truly unlock their potential is not readily available locally. Our junior engineers are going to be able to grow in their capacity. If you have more Ugandans who are now at mid-level to senior-level engineering talent, that is going to



Okello (centre-left) shakes hands with Gen Suzuki after announcing the technology partnership in Kampala last week

unlock a lot of opportunities for us.

The partnership is designed to connect Uganda's young English-speaking workforce with Japan's tightening technology labour market. Officials said this will allow direct collaboration between engineers in

both countries using AI-supported tools and structured delivery systems that meet Japanese standards.

The companies said pilot projects have already begun, with Ugandan junior engineers working alongside senior developers in both countries to

## A GOLD MINE

Gen Suzuki, director of Akademia Limited, a Japanese firm said: "The English market is red ocean, many competitors want to come there, but no one comes to the Japanese market. If we consider the combination of Ugandan engineers and Japanese market, we can open a very big successful market."

Japan faces growing workforce constraints in software development while Uganda's youthful workforce is expanding rapidly, creating a potential match between demand and supply, according to the agreement documents.

"The Ugandan market is very attractive due to the huge young population of the youth. Japanese companies are increasingly looking for opportunities to tap into this market. Under the private sector, we are currently supporting the ministry of ICT in several projects," Tsunoda Satoko, a representative from JICA, said.

build capacity and establish deliver models that could scale across multiple Japanese clients.