programmes with the national competence-based curriculum, marking a ma- teaching towards skills acquisition, which they are already implementing. "One of the challenges we face is t many students focus on passing exams. tice of raw l...

AI not displacing workers as yet – report

Eighty-eight percent of CEOs in a new report expect to increase employee head count, with AI complementing human capabilities.

BY STEPHEN OTAGE

The 2025 KPMG African CEOs (chief executive officers) Outlook survey results released yesterday indicate that unlike past years when it was believed that Artificial Intelligence (AI) would create job cuts, several CEOs now view it as a tool that is sharpening employee efficiency.

The report compiled by audit firm KPMG titled: "KPMG Africa CEO Outlook: A new wave of business confidence quietly taking shape across Africa," which was released yesterday, indicates that 71 percent of the 130 African CEOs who were interviewed last year are investing in generative AI, talent, ESG, and cybersecurity as the top four forces shaping their strategic priorities.

Mr Stephen Ineget, the country manager of KPMG Uganda, explained that 71 percent of the CEOs interviewed, believe AI is driving growth and resilience in their companies, while 88 percent of them expect to increase employee head count, with AI complementing human capabilities.

He added that 79 percent of the CEOS reported that they are navigating their national regulatory environments smoothly and also focusing on expanding their businesses across borders through regional integration and intra Africa trade.

"AI is making people more efficient, as you continue investing in AI, it frees people from routine jobs to do more meaningful work. For instance, instead of recruiting graduates to do data analytics, you recruit them to ana... strategy because AI has already ... the trends," he said.

Now in its 11th year, the survey f... part of KPMG's global CEO Outl... which includes insights from 1,3... CEOs across 11 markets.

According to this year's repo... regional integration and cross-bord... collaboration are emerging as gro... accelerators, with African CEOs increasingly prioritising intra-Afric... trade and market expansion aligned ... AfCFTA opportunities.

Despite global economic uncertainty and geopolitical tensions, Afric... CEOs are optimistic about their ... organisations' growth prospects. Th... is according to the KPMG 2025 Afric... CEO Outlook Survey, which capture... the perspectives of 130 CEOs acro... Southern, East, and West Africa.

Mr Asad Lukwago, a partner ... KPMG, who presented the report, said ... CEOs across all sectors interviewed ... presented positive sentiments about ... generative AI, talent retention, and ... positive prospects of their compan... expansion. He added that most CEOs ... from countries that bounced back from ... the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic ... anticipated economic growth in their ... countries.

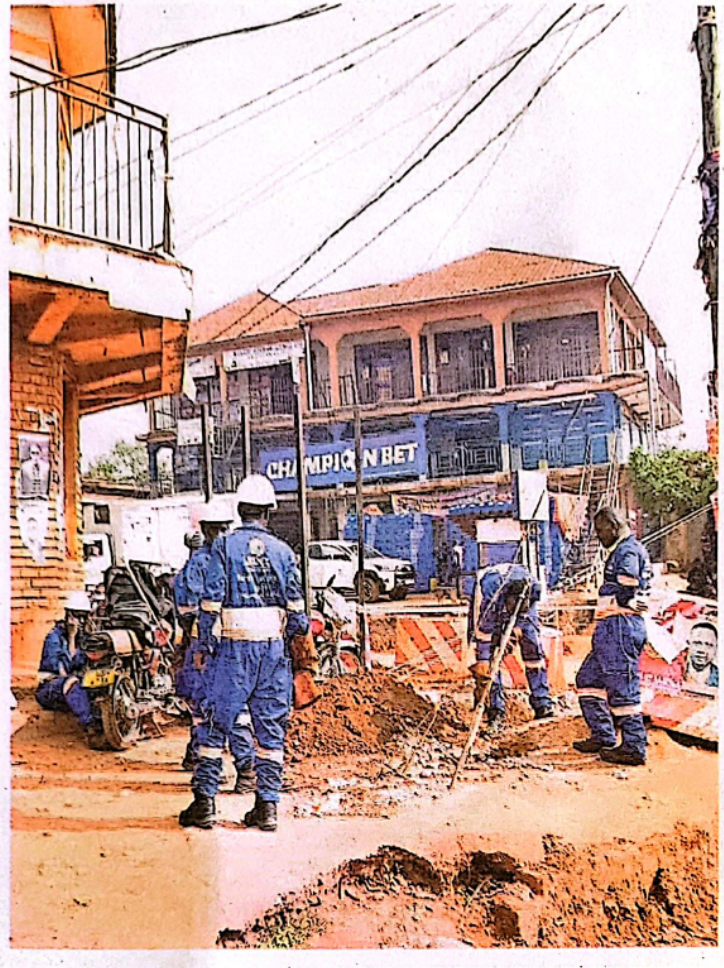
Asked what excites the CEOs ... about generative AI, Mr Lukwago ... explained that unlike developed ... countries where infrastructure has ... been developed to facilitate the use ... of AI, in developing countries, lack of ... infrastructure, electricity, and use of ... obsolete computers are some of the ... basic reasons why AI cannot be fully ... deployed in the current circumstances.

Ms Judy Rugasira, a panellist at the ... webinar, said in the property industry ... the human being is still the face of ... their industry because they delayed ... deploying AI in their operations.

Ms Sarah Arapta, the managing ... director of Citibank, observed that CEOs ... remain optimistic about the African ... market because of its underpenetrated ... and underbanked middle class.

She added that banks have also ... been instructed to promote financial ... inclusion and leverage the emerging ... financial systems, and African CEOs ... have learnt in uncertain conditions, ... which have made them resilient.

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Uganda Electricity Distribution Company Ltd employees dig up a road reserve to service electricity lines in Bwaise, Kampala City, recently. Such jobs are currently not being done by Artificial Intelligence (AI) but AI can only help workers detect faultlines in real time if the right datasets are installed in the network monitoring system. PHOTO/STEPHEN OTAGE

AI ANXIETY AND FEARS

Many workers worry AI is coming for their jobs. In March 2023, Goldman Sachs published a report showing that AI could replace the equivalent of 300 million full-time jobs. In 2022, PwC's annual global workforce survey showed that almost a third of respondents said they were worried about the prospect of their roles being replaced by technology in three years. For some people, generative AI tools feel as if they've come on fast and furious. OpenAI's ChatGPT broke out seemingly overnight, and the "AI arms race" is ramping up more every day, creating continuing uncertainty for workers.

Source: BBC

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