



Africa Smart Cities Investment Summit

Unleashing the AI city

REPORT 2024

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Africa Smart and Sustainable Cities Investment Summit 2024, hosted in Nairobi, Kenya, was a resounding success thanks to the invaluable contributions of our partners, institutions, and industry leaders.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Government of Kenya under the Ministry of ICT for their pivotal roles in making this summit possible.

Special recognition goes to our co hosts Nairobi County Government and Konza Technopolis. We deeply appreciate the ministers, mayors, and other dignitaries who graced the event with their presence.

Finally, we thank our esteemed High-Level Scientific Advisory Board members and all participants whose commitment and insights helped shape this landmark event. Together, we continue to drive the vision of smart and sustainable cities across Africa.





HON- JOHNSON SAKAJA

Governor,
Nairobi County



MICHAL MLYNÁR

Deputy Executive
Director,
UN-HABITAT



JEAN PHILBERT NSENGIMANA

Chief Curator,
ASCIS



DR ARMEN ORUJYAN

Chief Executive Officer,
Fast Foundation



**HON. JOYCE NABBOSA
SSEBUGWAWO**

Minister of State ICT and National
Guidance, Uganda



Erias Lukwago

Office of the Lord
Mayor Kampala



John Okwiri

Chief Executive Officer,
Konza Technopolis



H.E Demeke Atnafu

Ambassador, Ethiopia
Deputy Head of Mission
in Kenya



Hon James Muchiri

Deputy Governor,
Nairobi County - Kenya



Ashley Tan

Amazon Web Services (AWS),
Global Head of Sustainability
& Social Impact



Hastings Chikoko

Senior Director for Cities
Big Win Philanthropy

Smart City Index Awards

Position 1: The City of Johannesburg



Special Projects Smart Cities Award - Addis Ababa City Corridor Project





Smart City Index Awards

Position 1:
The City of Johannesburg



Position 2:
The City of Kigali



Position 3:
The City of Nairobi



Position 4:
The City of Lagos



Position 5:
The City of Kampala



SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY MEMBERS



Jean Philbert Nsengimana

Chief Curator,
Chairman- Dala Group



Bruno Lanvin

President Smart City Observatory,
IMD and Co-Chair of the ASCIS
Board



Hon James Muchiri

"Deputy Governor,
Nairobi County - Kenya



Claude Borna

Seme City,
Benin



Demola Aladekomo

Executive Chairman,
SmartCity PLC



Edlam Yemeru

Chief, Knowledge and
Innovation Branch,
UN-Habitat



Peter Rabley

Chief Executive Officer,
The Open Geospatial Consortium



Rafi Rich

Chief Executive Officer & Chief
Urban Disruptor ,
Smarter Urban iT & Strategies



John Okwiri

Chief Executive Officer,
Konza Technopolis



Stanley Kamanguya

Chief Executive Officer,
ICT Authority

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY MEMBERS



Dr Armen Orujyan

Chief Executive Officer,
Fast Foundation



Charlie Ngounou

President,
Afroleadership



Dr Shikoh Gitau

Chief Executive Officer,
Qhala



Edgar Kasenene

Chief Digital Officer,
IDEX Africa



Robin Miller

Founding Partner,
Axum



Alice Higiro

Smart Cities Project
Director
MINICT Rwanda



Angela Wamola

Head of Sub-Saharan Africa,
GSMA



Amb. Dennis Awori

Chairman,
Toyota Kenya



Kris Senanu

Founder and Chairman,
Blackrock Capital Ltd



Itoro Emembolu

Director
TechQuest STEM
Academy



Hastings Chikoko

Senior Director for Cities
Big Win Philanthropy

PARTNERS

HOST PARTNERS



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



ASCIS AT A GLANCE

With over 1,000 participants worldwide, the unforgettable inaugural edition witnessed ministers, mayors, international media houses, and senior leaders representing pan African countries at the summit.

The summit welcomed CXOs from Government, private and public organisations, along with the presence of region's leading technology and solution providers.



1000+
Delegates



30
Exhibitors



18+
Ministers & Mayors



30+
Countries



99
Speakers



28
Sessions



279
Institutions



25
Media Houses

UNLEASHING THE AI CITY:

CRAFTING PEOPLE-CENTERED SMART
CITIES WITH BEST PRACTICES AND GLOBAL
OUTLOOK FROM POLICY TO IMPLEMENTATION

SESSION LEAD





Moderator

MAGGIE MUTESI

Managing Editor,
Mansa Media Africa



**Keynote
Address**

**HON. JOYCE NABBOSA
SSEBUGWAWO**

Minister of State ICT and
National Guidance,
Uganda



**Keynote
Video**

BRUNO LANVIN

President Smart City Observatory,
IMD and Co-Chair of the ASCIS
Board



HASTINGS CHIKOKO

Senior Director for Cities
Big Win Philanthropy



ROBERTA MAIO

Digital Rights and
Inclusion Officer,
United Nations



DR ARMEN ORUJYAN

Chief Executive Officer,
Fast Foundation

SESSION OVERVIEW



The opening plenary session, titled **“Unleashing the AI City: Crafting People-Centered Smart Cities with Best Practices and Global Outlook from Policy to Implementation,”** set a visionary tone for the summit. High-level speakers, including Hon. Joyce Nabbosa Ssebugwawo (Uganda's Minister of State for ICT and National Guidance) and Bruno Lanvin (President of the Smart City Observatory, IMD, and Co-Chair of the ASCIS Board), emphasized that African cities, faced with rapid urbanization, must evolve into people-centered smart environments. Rather than adopting a purely technocentric model, these cities should integrate digital tools—especially AI—into broader policies that prioritize inclusivity, sustainability, and social equity. The speakers argued that the continent's unique demographic shifts and cultural contexts present an opportunity to rethink urban planning, ensure public participation, and harness data-driven solutions for cleaner energy, better public services, and environmental stewardship. Their combined insights positioned Africa's cities not only as beneficiaries of global best practices, but also as potential leaders in defining new paradigms of smart, human-centric, and climate-resilient urban development.

KEY SESSION OUTCOMES

- **Policy and Inclusivity:** Panelists repeatedly stressed that sound policies and regulations must underlie every smart city initiative. This includes bridging digital divides through affordable internet access, digital literacy programs, and transparent data governance frameworks.
- **Sustainability and Climate Action:** The Q&A highlighted the urgent need for environment-friendly solutions, encouraging stakeholders to integrate renewable energy sources, waste-to-energy technologies, and smart water management systems to reduce pollution and conserve resources.
- **People-Centered Participation:** Both panelists and participants advocated continuous public involvement in the design, implementation, and feedback processes to ensure that smart solutions match citizens' actual needs and uphold fundamental human rights and equality.
- **Incremental Implementation:** From the discussion emerged a consensus on starting with pilot projects in transport or healthcare and scaling them up after learning from initial successes. Such a phased approach was identified as critical for refining policies and innovations before broader deployment.
- **Commitment to Collaboration:** The exchanges underscored the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships—linking governments, local authorities, private sector innovators, academia, and civil society—to foster sustainable growth and ensure that African cities can become global models for inclusive, future-ready urban development.

FIRESIDE CHAT

TECH FOR GOOD: POWERING
HOMEGROWN INNOVATION FOR
AFRICA'S SUSTAINABLE
SMART CITIES

SESSION LEAD



Moderator

MAGGIE MUTESI

Managing Editor,
Mansa Media



JEAN PHILBERT NSEUNGIMANA

Chief Curator,
ASCIS



ASHLEY TAN

International Head Sustainability
& Social Impact,
AWS

The fireside chat on "Tech for Good: Powering Homegrown Innovation for Africa's Sustainable Smart Cities" illustrated how leveraging technology, local resources, and strategic partnerships can foster impactful solutions for urban challenges.

Ashley Tan (AWS) presented concrete examples, such as the M-MAMA mobile health program and AI-driven disaster response efforts in Kenya, to show how data, AI, and local communities can collaborate to save lives and build resilience. Jean Philbert Nsengimana (ASCIS) emphasized bridging gaps between innovators and investors, and aligning private capital with genuine community needs. Throughout the conversation, panelists and audience members called for balanced AI regulation, inclusive planning that integrates marginalized communities, early digital education to build a future-ready workforce, and strong multi-stakeholder cooperation. The session underscored that nurturing homegrown innovations, guided by people-centered values and responsive policies, can help African cities become global leaders in sustainable, inclusive growth.

KEY OUTCOMES

Concrete Success Models: Initiatives like M-MAMA showcased how mobile tech plus local resources (e.g. taxis as ambulances) can effectively address health gaps, illustrating replicable models for other services.

5Cs Framework for Sustainable Smart Cities: Financial, Tech, Human, Political, and Convening capital must align to create stable ecosystems where AI and digital solutions can scale and serve citizens.

AI and Disaster Response: The positive role of AI in forecasting emergencies and guiding disaster management highlighted data's power in refining service delivery and mitigating crises.

Balanced Regulation and Early Education: From the Q&A emerged calls for ethical, inclusive AI policies, plus the integration of digital literacy and AI fundamentals in education to future-proof Africa's workforce.

Inclusivity and Public Participation: Audience feedback reinforced that smart city planning must prioritize marginalized communities, integrating cultural sensitivity and grassroots participation to ensure no one is left behind.

GROWTH BY DESIGN

LEVERAGING AI RESEARCH AND
DIGITAL SKILLS FOR SUSTAINABLE
INNOVATION IN AFRICA'S SMART
CITIES

SESSION LEAD



MODERATOR

MERCY KIMALAT

Chief Executive Officer,
ASSEK



OLAF SEIDEL

Head of Project SPARK,
GIZ



ANNE SALIM

Senior Product Manager
Qhala ICT for education and
product development



NGUGI KAREGA

Co-Founder,
Skizaa HQ



BILLY OTIENO

Solutions Engineer,
Oracle

SESSION OVERVIEW



The “Growth by Design” plenary session focused on how AI research, digital skills, and strategic partnerships can collectively advance the development of sustainable and inclusive smart cities in Africa. Moderated by Mercy Kimalat, the discussion featured experts like Olaf Seidel (GIZ), Anne Salim (Qhala), Ngugi Karega (Skiza AI), and Billy Otieno (Oracle) who underscored the need to address urban challenges—such as congestion, inequitable service access, and pollution—through data-driven, human-centered solutions. They emphasized that smart cities must integrate local contexts, reflect the needs of marginalized communities, and be supported by stable policy environments, skilled workforces, and strong ecosystems for innovation. Audience contributions reinforced the importance of careful regulation, tailored curriculum development, and empowering startups to deliver meaningful, climate-conscious urban improvements.

Key Outcomes:

- **People-Centered Design:** Panelists stressed that truly smart cities should focus on inclusivity, ensuring that informal settlements and marginalized groups benefit from AI-driven services.
- **Data and AI as Enablers:** From optimizing traffic flows to enhancing disaster resilience, AI and data analytics were viewed as essential for informed decision-making and responsive urban management.
- **Startups and Ecosystem Support:** Panelists and audience members highlighted the role of incubators, accelerators, and innovation hubs, along with strategic partnerships, to help local entrepreneurs overcome funding barriers and scale their solutions for sustainable impact.
- **Balanced Regulation and Governance:** To maintain trust, smart city strategies must be backed by sound policies and regulations that encourage innovation while protecting privacy, securing data, and addressing cybersecurity concerns.

BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS IN AI-DRIVEN SMART CITIES

SESSION LEAD



Moderator

ANGELA WEKESA
Principal Standards
Officer/National Secretary,
ISO Technical Committee



REUBEN GISORE
Technical Director,
ARSO



HASSAN NDISHO
Representative
from Tatu City



CLIFFORD OKEMBO
Kenya Bureau of
Standards (KEBS)

SESSION BRIEF



The “Blueprint for Success in AI-Driven Smart Cities” plenary underscored the critical importance of standards and regulatory frameworks in shaping Africa’s urban future. Convened by ARSO and KEBS, moderated by Angela Wekesa and guided by expert panelists including Reuben Gisore (ARSO), Hassan Ndisho (Tatu City) and Clifford Okembo (KEBS), the discussion revealed that standards serve as a foundational backbone for ensuring interoperability, fostering innovation, and promoting sustainability in AI-driven cities. By integrating environmental, social, and economic considerations into these frameworks, African cities can better align global best practices with local needs. The interactive Q&A further highlighted data security, inclusivity, and sustainable waste management as central issues that standards must address. Overall, the session emphasized that forward-looking, context-sensitive standards will be essential for building trust, attracting investment, and ensuring that smart city technologies genuinely improve the quality of urban life.

Key Outcomes:

- **Interoperability and Innovation:** Panelists stressed that standardized frameworks enable different devices and systems to seamlessly interact, accelerating the adoption of AI-driven urban solutions.

- **Data Protection and Privacy:** The Q&A spotlighted the need for robust data governance models and privacy-by-design principles to build citizen trust and secure long-term success of AI applications in urban management.**Inclusive Urban Design:** Ensuring that standards reflect the needs of marginalized communities is vital to preventing exclusion and ensuring that smart city initiatives distribute benefits equitably.
- **Sustainability and Circular Economy:** Discussions on extended producer responsibility (EPR) and green standards underscored how properly implemented standards can guide environmental stewardship, waste management, and resource conservation.
- **Policy Enforcement and Local Adaptation:** Beyond developing standards, consistent enforcement, awareness campaigns, capacity-building, and local contextualization are needed to ensure that standards become practical tools for sustainable and inclusive urban development.

FROM PROMISES TO IMPACT:

DRIVING SMART CITIES
WITH GREEN TECHNOLOGY
SOLUTIONS

SESSION LEAD



Moderator

RAFI RICH

CEO & Chief Urban
Disruptor



FLORENCE MOSEKI

Senior ICT officer,
Ministry of Interior



PROF. EMMANUEL MUTISYA

Council Chairman, Kenya Advanced
Institute of Science and Technology



CRAIG CLULOW

CEO, Kigali Innovation City

SESSION OVERVIEW



The plenary session "From Promises to Impact: Driving Smart Cities with Green Technology Solutions" emphasized that green technologies are pivotal in shaping sustainable and energy-efficient urban environments across Africa. Moderated by Rafi Rich and hosted by CFAO, the conversation featured insights from Florence Moseti, Craig Clulow, Prof. Emmanuel Mutisya (KAIST). The panelists stressed that renewable energy, efficient mobility systems, and integrated sustainability frameworks are not only technologically feasible but crucial to meeting African cities' pressing challenges—from overcrowded transport networks to poor waste management. They highlighted the need for holistic approaches involving academia's research insights,

private sector innovation, and supportive government policies to ensure that smart cities become climate-resilient, inclusive spaces that support economic growth, protect the environment, and serve all urban residents.

Key Outcomes:

- **Policy Alignment and Incentives:** Panelists agreed that future-facing policies and incentives for private investments are essential to catalyze clean energy adoption, waste reduction, and sustainable transportation.
- **Academic Engagement for Practical Solutions:** Universities and research institutes should focus on applied research, producing policy briefs and action-oriented frameworks that guide government decision-making and resource allocation for green solutions.
- **Energy and Mobility Transformation:** Innovations like hybrid and electric vehicles, supported by infrastructure investments and stable energy grids, emerged as models for reducing emissions and enhancing urban mobility.
- **Capacity Building and Community Inclusion:** The Q&A underscored that community engagement, capacity building, and inclusivity ensure local ownership of green solutions. Empowered citizens and skilled workforces can sustain and scale climate-friendly initiatives.
- **Regional Knowledge Exchange:** The discussion endorsed cross-city collaborations, public-private partnerships, and knowledge-sharing platforms to standardize best practices, replicate successful models, and achieve continent-wide environmental benefits.

MAYORS AND MINISTERS LEADERSHIP BREAKFAST



During a private ministerial leadership breakfast, leaders from African cities, government agencies, industry, academia, and development partners convened to map out a collaborative framework for smart cities driven by AI, data, and green innovation. The participants—from Addis Ababa to Nairobi and Kampala—shared their commitments to people-centered policies, inclusive growth, and sustainable infrastructure. They emphasized the urgency of demystifying AI for citizens, aligning policy and regulation with emerging technologies, and using education to build a future-ready workforce. The discussion acknowledged urban challenges like congestion, energy deficits, and informal transport systems while highlighting opportunities for local capacity building, private investment, cross-border knowledge exchange, and grassroots engagement. The outcome was a collective dedication to forging long-term partnerships, implementing standards, and ensuring that every smart city initiative is both environmentally sound and socially beneficial.

KEY OUTCOMES

- **Holistic People-Centered Approach:** Smart city solutions should integrate grassroots needs, cultural sensitivity, and equitable service delivery to all communities, including marginalized groups.
- **AI and Data Literacy:** Participants recognized a gap between complex AI solutions and public understanding, stressing the need for comprehensive digital education and capacity-building from early childhood to professional levels.
- **Policies, Standards, and Regulation:** Strong regulations, enforcement of standards, and stable procurement guidelines are essential to ensure interoperability, trust, and data security in AI-driven systems.
- **Mobility and Energy Optimization:** Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS), pay-as-you-go renewable energy models, and e-mobility solutions can enhance urban resilience, efficiency, and environmental quality.
- **Financing and Partnerships:** Sustainable investment models—encompassing public-private partnerships, incubators, and accelerators—will unlock capital and foster innovation, while inter-city collaborations facilitate knowledge exchange and scalable best practices.

THE ROAD AHEAD

INNOVATIONS IN URBAN MOBILITY FOR EXPANDING CITIES

SESSION LEAD



Moderator

FLORENCE MOSETI

Senior ICT officer,
Ministry of Interior



RAFI RICH

CEO & Chief Urban
Disruptor



AKIRA WADA

Managing Director,
CFAO



DAVID KAMBO

Director Lands & Infrastructure,
Special Economic Zone
Authority

SESSION OVERVIEW

"The Road Ahead: Innovations in Urban Mobility for Expanding Cities" offered a strategic look at how African cities can embrace data-driven technology, green energy, and collaborative policies to enhance transport systems. Moderated by Florence Moseti (Ministry of Interior), the panel-featuring Rafi Rich (Chief Urban Disruptor), Akira Wada (CFAO), and David Kambo (Special Economic Zone Authority)-discussed the urgent need to shift from car-centric planning towards integrated, multimodal networks leveraging e-mobility, IoT-based traffic management, and renewable energy grids. The panelists stressed that policy reforms, infrastructure investment, and inclusive community engagement are crucial for making public transport efficient, affordable, and environmentally sound. Audience contributions underscored that sustainable transport systems must prioritize local innovation, tackle data fragmentation, and ensure equitable access to services, ultimately delivering healthier, more productive urban spaces.



KEY OUTCOMES

- **Integrated, Sustainable Transport Systems:** Emphasis on EV buses, hybrid vehicles, BRT corridors, and smart street lighting to cut emissions, reduce congestion, and enhance user experience.
- **Data and AI-Driven Planning:** Harnessing real-time data, IoT sensors, and AI analytics can inform route optimization, manage congestion hotspots, and improve safety and air quality monitoring.
- **Policy and Standards Alignment:** Effective regulations, future-focused standards, and flexible procurement guidelines encourage investment, accelerate EV charging infrastructure rollout, and improve harmonization across vendors and transport modes.
- **Inclusive Community Engagement:** Incorporating informal transport operators, adapting innovations to local contexts, and involving citizens in decision-making ensure that green mobility solutions are culturally sensitive and widely accepted.
- **Scalability Through Partnerships:** Public-private collaborations, pilot projects, and regional knowledge exchange can help cities scale proven solutions, replicate best practices, and attract stable financing and innovation for lasting impact.

BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE 21ST CENTURY WORKFORCE:

HARNESSING AI TO
ENHANCE THE FUTURE
AND DIGNITY OF WORK.

SESSION LEAD



Moderator

NGUGI KAREGA

Co-Founder - Skizaa HQ



EDWIN MACHARIA

Managing Partner,
Axum



DAVIS KAKURU

Chief Executive Office,
Iclight Ltd



BOTAN ABDULLAHI

Technology Mentor,
Moringa School

Session Overview

The plenary session “Building an Inclusive 21st Century Workforce: Harnessing AI to Enhance the Future and Dignity of Work” focused on AI’s potential to reshape African labor markets, fostering both economic opportunity and social equity. Moderated by Ngugi Karega, the conversation featured insights from Edwin Macharia (Axum), Davis Kakuru (Chief Executive Office, Iclight Ltd), and Botan Abdullahi (Technology Mentor, Moringa School) (Nunnovation Africa Foundation) on how to move beyond fears of automation-driven job losses. Instead, they viewed AI as a catalyst for upskilling, enabling workers to advance from basic digital literacy to fundamental AI competencies. Panelists highlighted the importance of culturally sensitive education reforms, balanced regulations that encourage innovation while safeguarding rights, and creating robust partnerships among governments, businesses, and academia. Audience questions reinforced the need for inclusive approaches that adapt AI tools to local contexts, ensure data protection, and maintain worker dignity. Ultimately, the session underscored that, with thoughtful planning and cooperation, AI can help African cities leapfrog into more resilient economies, produce skilled workforces, and safeguard ethical labor standards.



KEY OUTCOMES

- **Upskilling Over Displacement:** The panel emphasized AI as a tool to enhance productivity and free workers from repetitive tasks, creating room for higher-value, more creative roles rather than wholesale job elimination.
- **From Literacy to Expertise:** Current training efforts must go beyond basic digital literacy, evolving toward fundamental AI education and advanced skill-building programs, bootcamps, and curriculum reforms.
- **Inclusive, Human-Centered Design:** AI solutions should be culturally sensitive and designed to uplift marginalized groups. This includes protecting privacy, ensuring equitable access, and fostering safer work environments.
- **Collaborative Frameworks:** Governments must adapt policies and regulatory frameworks to encourage innovation, while private sector partners invest in training and mentorship. Continuous dialogue and public-private-academic linkages are key to sustaining workforce development.
- **Local Solutions and Trust Building:** Locally developed AI applications, transparent data governance, and community engagement strategies are crucial in building trust, reducing skepticism, and ensuring that the benefits of AI-driven workforce evolution are broadly felt.



REGIONAL CONSULTATION

INTERNATIONAL GUIDELINES ON PEOPLE- CENTERED SMART CITIES

SESSION LEAD



The UN-Habitat consultative session on people-centered smart city guidelines was a critical milestone in aligning digital transformation, sustainability, and social inclusion within urban development policies. Stakeholders from national and local governments, private sector, academia, civil society, and international agencies converged to review the draft principles, ensuring cultural sensitivity, transparency, and accessibility. The discussions centered on the urgent need to bridge the digital divide, strengthen policy and regulatory frameworks, build human capacity through both short-term bootcamps and long-term educational reforms, and integrate these guidelines with existing national strategies.

Emphasis was placed on offering incentives to the private sector, employing community-level awareness campaigns, and providing flexible monitoring and evaluation frameworks adaptable to local priorities. Ethical considerations, robust data protection, and human-centric AI deployments emerged as essential to building trust and maintaining human rights. Overall, the session served as a critical checkpoint for refining the guidelines, making them more relevant, actionable, and empowering for all stakeholders.

KEY OUTCOMES

- **Inclusion and Cultural Sensitivity:** Agreement that guidelines must be understandable, culturally aware, and inclusive, starting with bottom-up community consultations.
- **Policy and Incentives:** Stakeholders called for aligned, future-proof policies, meaningful incentives (like tax breaks), and testbeds for innovators to encourage adoption of the guidelines.
- **Capacity Building:** Participants highlighted the need for fundamental and advanced digital literacy, combining short-term bootcamps with long-term educational reforms, ensuring continuous skill development.
- **Flexible Monitoring and Evaluation:** Cities require adaptable indicators and iterative feedback loops to measure success, ensuring transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement.
- **Ethical and Data Considerations:** Robust data protection, human-centric AI governance, and ethical standards are vital to maintaining trust and upholding human rights in smart city implementations.

AI IN GOVERNANCE

AFRICA'S JOURNEY TO TRANSFORMING E-SERVICES

SESSION LEAD



DIANA NJUGUNA
Program and Content Lead,
Dala Africa

Moderator



MICHAEL ODHIAMBO
Director Shared Services ,
ICT Authority



LUCAS OMOLLO
HSC - Manager, ICT & ,
Smart City Solutions ,
Konza Technopolis Development
Authority



JAMES AYUGI
Founder & CEO,
Webmasters

SESSION BRIEF

The session "AI in Governance: Africa's Journey to Transforming E-Services," moderated by Diana Njuguna, (Dala Africa), brought together leaders from government, industry, and innovative institutions—Michael Odhiambo (Director Shared Services, ICT Authority), James Ayugi (Founder & CEO, Webmasters) and Lucas Omollo (Manager, ICT & Smart City Solutions, Konza Technopolis). They examined how AI can drive digital transformation in public service delivery, enhance accountability, and foster inclusive, climate-conscious urban development. Central to the discussion was the importance of strong leadership, adaptive policy frameworks, and continuous capacity-building to ensure that AI benefits all citizens. The panelists highlighted the need for public-private collaborations, transparent data governance, and culturally sensitive approaches to make e-services more accessible, efficient, and resilient. Looking ahead to the 2025 summit in Addis Ababa, they called for concrete progress in AI integration, localizing solutions, and demonstrating tangible improvements in governance and service delivery.



KEY OUTCOMES

- **Leadership and Policy Alignment:** Panelists agreed that clear, forward-looking policies, along with political and administrative commitment, are essential to integrate AI effectively into public sector workflows.
- **Ethical, Inclusive AI Deployment:** Emphasis was placed on ensuring AI respects human rights, privacy, and cultural contexts, avoiding marginalization and promoting equitable access to digital services.
- **Capacity Building and Skills Development:** Participants stressed investing in digital literacy and AI competencies for public servants and citizens, supported by short-term training, long-term curriculum reforms, and continuous professional development.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** The panel encouraged strong partnerships between government agencies, private sector players (like Qhala and TESPOK), and research institutions to co-create solutions, test them through pilot programs, and scale them nationally.
- **Monitoring and Adaptability:** A call for transparent M&E frameworks, adaptable performance indicators, and iterative feedback loops ensures AI-driven governance stays relevant, responsive, and continuously improved over time.

UNLOCKING SMART CITY POTENTIAL THROUGH STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

PRESENTERS



JOYCE KIBE
Chief Executive Officer,
Powerpay Africa



ROSEMARY KHALIFA
Head of Business Development,
Wonderkid Multimedia



AMY ROBINSON
Head of Digital,
BasiGo



GEORGE KIBALA BAUER,
Director,
GSMA

SPEAKERS



JISAS LEMASAGARAI
Senior Market



CRYSTAL MUGIMBA
Principal, Open Capital
Advisors



ANGELA WAMOLA
Head of Sub-Saharan Africa,
GSMA



WANJIKU NJIRE
HSC - Senior Manager,
Government Relations



HENRY OCHIENG
Chief Executive Officer, Kenya Alliance
of Resident Associations





SESSION BRIEF

The “Unlocking Smart City Potential through Strategic Partnerships” session brought together leaders from GSMA, DALA Africa, private innovators, telecom operators, and community representatives to explore how collaborative efforts can accelerate the deployment of innovative digital solutions for African cities. Presentations from PowerPay Africa, Wonderkid Multimedia, and BasiGo illustrated the transformative power of IoT-driven pay-as-you-go energy systems, data-enabled public service platforms, and electric bus fleets in reshaping local economies and public transportation. The panel discussion underscored the importance of forging strong alliances between governments, private sector innovators, and civil society to ensure that smart city projects are both practical and impactful. Speakers highlighted that beyond technology, lasting change hinges on inclusive policymaking, cultural adaptation, capacity-building, and sustainable business models to scale solutions for broad societal benefits.

Concluding with the signing of an MOU between GSMA and DALA Africa, the session culminated in a tangible commitment to future collaboration. This agreement symbolized a collective pledge to foster knowledge exchange, support local entrepreneurs, attract investment, and accelerate digital innovations that enhance economic resilience, improve access to public services, and empower citizens. Looking ahead, attendees left with a renewed sense of purpose and practical steps to move from isolated pilots toward integrated, people-centered smart city ecosystems.

KEY OUTCOMES

- **Holistic Collaboration:** Agreement that effective smart city development requires robust partnerships among governments, businesses, academia, and residents.
- **Scalable Business Models:** Emphasis on designing financially and operationally sustainable solutions, encouraging private sector participation and long-term investment.
- **Policy Alignment and Incentives:** Calls for policies, incentives, and procurement frameworks that support innovation, reduce duplication, and guide responsible data use.
- **Capacity Building and Inclusivity:** Recognized the need for digital literacy, local language adaptation, and inclusive engagement strategies to ensure that no community is left behind.
- **Formalized Commitment:** The GSMA-DALA Africa MOU represented a significant milestone, committing both parties to knowledge sharing, ecosystem strengthening, and scaling impactful digital solutions for Africa's future smart cities.

MOU Signing: Dala Group and GSMA

The session concluded with a formal signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between GSMA and DALA Africa. This partnership symbolized a collective commitment to:

- Foster collaboration and knowledge exchange on smart city development.

- Enhance support for local innovators, scale digital solutions, and attract investment.

- Develop frameworks and initiatives that align with the principles of people-centered, inclusive, and climate-resilient smart cities.

This MOU underscored the forum's overarching message: advancing smart cities in Africa relies on deep, sustained partnerships.



SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

SESSION BRIEF

In this late-stage segment of the Africa Smart Cities Investment Summit, participants were introduced to a technical presentation by an ICT Authority representative highlighting a blockchain- and AI-based platform aimed at helping African exporters meet stringent carbon emission reporting requirements set by the European Union. This solution—combining drone data, AI analytics, and blockchain-ledger transparency—showed how cutting-edge technologies can empower local farmers and communities, ensuring compliance with global environmental standards and improving income potential. The demonstration underscored the broader summit themes of forging strategic partnerships, fostering homegrown innovations, and applying advanced digital tools not only to urban centers but also to rural-urban linkages, ultimately supporting inclusive economic growth, environmental stewardship, and sustainable smart city ecosystems.

KEY OUTCOMES

- **Integration of Emerging Technologies:** The presentation exemplified how AI, blockchain, and IoT (e.g., drone imaging) can come together to generate transparent, compliant data useful for meeting international environmental regulations.
- **Economic and Environmental Synergy:** By enabling small-scale exporters to document and verify their carbon emissions, the solution helps maintain market access, encourages climate-responsive practices, and promotes more sustainable value chains.
- **Scalable and Adaptable Models:** Although starting with agricultural exports, the methods and technology stack are adaptable to broader urban contexts, informing data-driven policy and enabling better environmental management in cities.
- **Partnerships and Community Empowerment:** The emphasis on engaging farmers, community organizations, and various stakeholders illustrates the inclusive approach needed to ensure technology deployments benefit grassroots communities as well as city dwellers.
- **Future-Oriented Commitments:** The summit's conclusion hinted at ongoing accountability, with the newly formed partnerships (such as the GSMA-DALA Africa MOU) expected to yield tangible, measurable impacts by the next summit, demonstrating the summit's dedication to turning vision into practice.

CLOSING CEREMONY FIRESIDE CHAT



CLIMATE RESILIENT CITIES:
INNOVATING FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN FUTURE

SPEAKERS



RAFI RICH
CEO & Chief
Urban Disruptor



DR ARMEN ORUJYAN
Technical Director,
ARSO



JEAN PHILBERT NSENGIMANA
Chief Curator,
ASCIS

SESSION BRIEF

The closing ceremony, anchored by a fireside chat featuring "Chief Urban Disruptor" Rafi Rich and contributions from Dr. Armen Orujyan and Jean Philbert Nsengimana, brought the summit's themes full circle, emphasizing leadership, climate resilience, and tangible impact. Rafi's personal anecdote about his wife's influence illustrated the human dimension behind urban innovation and sustainability choices. The discussion tied earlier priorities—AI-driven data approaches, inclusive policies, and strong leadership—to the urgent need for cities to independently drive climate action, given global negotiations' shortcomings for African interests. The session reiterated the importance of forging enduring partnerships, creating permanent support platforms for innovators, and ensuring that by the next event, the summit's impact would be measurable through real-life success stories. The closing moments, including a final group photograph, symbolized the collective determination to transform African cities into sustainable, people-centered environments guided by strategic alliances and responsive policies.

GALA DINNER AND SMART CITIES AWARD

The gala dinner was a thought-provoking gathering of innovators, city planners, and stakeholders passionate about Africa's urban future. A highlight of the evening was Raffi Rich's compelling speech, which emphasized the need for Africa to define its own criteria for smart cities. While benchmarking against the West offers valuable lessons, Africa's unique challenges and opportunities call for a localized framework that reflects its distinctive needs. Raffi also stressed that smart city rankings could foster healthy competition among African countries and encouraged greater collaboration to onboard more nations into the movement.

Jean Philbert, curator of the African Smart Cities Innovation Summit (ASCIS), expressed pride in the strides Addis Ababa has made in its journey toward becoming a smart city. In a significant announcement, he revealed that Addis will host the next ASCIS 2025 from September 3rd to 5th, urging attendees to save the dates for this important event.

The dinner also celebrated outstanding achievements in African smart cities through the presentation of awards in two categories. In the Special Projects Smart Cities Award category, the winners were Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Konza City Technopolis, Kenya; and Kigali Innovation City, Rwanda. These projects were recognized for their innovative approaches and impact on urban development.

In the Best Africa Smart Cities Award category, Kampala secured 5th place, followed by Lagos in 4th place. Kigali earned 3rd place for its significant strides in urban innovation and development while Nairobi earned the prestigious 2nd place. The top honor was awarded to Johannesburg, recognized for its holistic approach to creating a sustainable, interconnected, and innovative urban environment.

The evening was a reminder of Africa's immense potential to redefine urban living by leveraging its unique strengths. The shared vision of creating interconnected, innovative, and sustainable cities continues to inspire collaboration and progress across the continent.







Save
The
Date



Africa
Smart Cities
Investment
Summit

03-05 September,
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



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20 - 22 NOVEMBER
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Africa Smart City Investment Summit 2025 (ASCIS 2025)

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