

# Chamber Quarterly

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**JANUARY - MARCH 2023**



**MONDAY 2ND JANUARY, 2023**

## Kenya's economy tipped to flourish in the New Year

The Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) has expressed confidence that Kenyans will benefit from more local and international business opportunities in 2023. In his New Year's message to Kenyans, the agency's boss Richard Ngatia explained that there are strong indicators that the economy will flourish in 2023. Mr Ngatia was recently appointed a member of the World Chambers Federation General Council. The appointment earned him a congratulatory message from President William Ruto. The Head of State observed that the appointment was important for the development of Kenya's MSME capital agenda ahead of the Kenya International investment conference in March 2023. "During this festive season, on behalf of the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI), we take time to reflect upon the good things we have done together like our partnership with you last year. We appreciate working with you and hope that the year that has just come in will bring you happiness and success," Ngatia said. Mr Ngatia, however, said the New Year season ushers in an opportunity for renewal, fresh opportunities and for Kenyans to build on the successes of the old year and urged Kenyans to reflect with gratitude, the journey the nation has walked together with them last year. [Read more](#)

**SATURDAY 7TH JANUARY, 2023**

## Kenya-Germany sign trade deal to facilitate technological growth

Kenya and Germany are set to improve trade volumes and technology exchange for the benefit of their citizens. This is after trade talks between the President of the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) Richard Ngatia and the Mayor of the City of Gersothen Michael Worle. During a press conference at the Chamber offices in Nairobi, Ngatia noted that the Kenyan business is keen to work with Bavarian businesses and Germany in general in areas of ICT, E-Mobility, TVET, and vocational training to help in technology transfer and development. "We discussed areas of development cooperation between our countries. Kenya is the most important trading partner for Germany in East Africa. The mayor conveyed his readiness to support in the creation of linkages for business," Ngatia said. He further expressed confidence that Kenya's German relationship is set to grow especially in the areas of capacity building for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises MSMEs.



Other areas of collaboration featured in the talks include health, construction, and agriculture. Michael noted that Bavaria is the commercial and economic capital of Germany, and there was a lot to share and exchange especially in areas of clean water and green energy. [Read more](#)



**TUESDAY 10TH JANUARY, 2023**

## KNCCI lobbies for reduced tax rates in Kakamega to boost investments

The Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and industry, Kakamega chapter has kicked off a process to lobby for reduced tax rates and a unified business permit by the Kakamega County government. On Monday, they held a familiarization meeting with the county government revenue agency where they highlighted the business environment in order to seek ways that can make Kakamega a better investment destination. The Chairman of the chamber, Kakamega chapter, Wycliffe Kibisu said they had presented a comparison of tax rates with other Counties around the Western region to ensure Kakamega County government comes up with tax rates that are able to place it in a competitive position for investor choices. “The reason why most investors might not be coming to Kakamega is because of the rates which are higher compared to the neighboring Counties. “When coming up with licenses we should ensure we are competitive so that the difference is not a hundred times more than our neighbor’s thus automatically making Kakamega not an investment destination of choice”, said Kibisu. The chairman also noted that the Chamber of Commerce and Industry will now have a slot in the decision-making on matters of trade which also involves business rates by the County government finance ministry.

[Read more](#)



**FRIDAY 13TH JANUARY, 2023**



## Commerce Chamber commence membership Drive

The Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) has launched a membership engagement drive. The initiative is themed ‘know the member better 2023’ – an initiative to support members’ operations, needs, and challenges for the betterment of a conducive business environment.



In this regard, KNCCI president Richard Ngatia led a section of the KNCCI secretariat to visit Camco Equipment Kenya Limited. Said Ngatia: “We are impressed with the amount of effort being into this project. “We have a plan to grow businesses in Kenya with support from President William Ruto. For this to happen, there is a need to look at and tap into other opportunities More business opportunities translate to more employment chances for our youth. “The chamber strives to support its members through various engagements to emulate the rallying cry ‘Growing your business together’ To support Business Growth. The expansion drive comes days after Ngatia was appointed a member of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC).Following the appointment, Kenya’s president Dr William Ruto led Kenyans in congratulating him. [Read more](#)



**TUESDAY 17TH JANUARY, 2023**



## New World Chambers Federation Council members reflect commitment to diversity



Representing more than 1,400 chambers from around the world, the World Chambers Federation (WCF) of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) has announced election results of its General Council, which scores high on regional and gender diversity. In collaboration with ICC, the WCF provides all the tools to support Chambers and MSMEs, connecting chambers worldwide to develop and reinforce our chamber community. Chamber leaders from local, regional, national and transnational chambers were eligible to run for the General Council, each member serving a three-year term with the opportunity to run twice. In addition to the 20 elected seats, 15 WCF members are appointed by the WCF Chair, in coordination with the ICC Secretary General and the WCF Executive Committee, to ensure a balanced General Council. This secures diversity in the network, ensuring members are varied in terms of gender and geography, including developed and developing economy, chamber size and type of chamber. Five Transnational Chambers representing different regions of the world have also been invited to join the Council. The final composition of the Council sees representation from all parts of membership worldwide. It includes nine representatives from the Americas, thirteen from the Africa and Middle East region, nine from Asia-Pacific and twelve from Europe. With thirteen women set to serve on the council, it is also the most gender diverse membership in WCF history. [Read more](#)

**THURSDAY 25TH JANUARY, 2023**

## Ngatia leads high-powered delegation in DRC Statehouse courtesy call

The Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) President Richard Ngatia led a high power delegation of Kenyan trade and government leaders for a meeting with the Secretary General to Democratic Republic of Congo President Felix Tshishekedi, Jean Jacques Luboya Tshishima in Kinshasa. Ngatia was accompanied by Machakos



County Governor Wavinya Ndeti in her capacity as the chairperson of the Trade, Industry Manufacturing and Enterprise Development Committee in the Kenyan Council of Governors. The high-powered delegation held a meeting with the Tshishima whose main agenda was the Benin-Africa AfCTA, East African Community common market protocols, opening borders and collaboration between Kenya and DR Congo. Governor Ndeti briefed the President's Secretary General on the objectives of the Trade Conference and mission where she highlighted key products that have great potential for DRC like beef and tea from Kenya. Tshishima shared a brief on DRC's potential sectors such as minerals and textiles. He indicated that Kenya was the first country to bring a huge delegation of the business community to DRC and looked forward to implementing the requests of the delegation. Chamber President Richard Ngatia briefed on KNCCI's mandate and function further expounding on the sectors Kenya had an interest in. Ngatia further conveyed messages from the KNCCI patron, President William Ruto and indicated his keenness to have open borders in the region to facilitate trade. Tshishima acknowledged the major sectors represented by the delegates of Tea, Coffee, ICT and Technology and Professional Skills that Kenya can offer the DRC. [Read more](#)

**MONDAY 6TH FEBRUARY, 2023**

## Revamped rail to spur economy, says Mwadime

The Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) express passenger train stopover in Voi will boost trade and tourism in Taita Taveta County, Governor Andrew Mwadime has said. Mwadime said this after the Makadara passenger SGR train made its maiden stopover at Voi on Thursday, sparking celebrations from local and tourism sector players.



On Sunday, Mwadime said the SGR train services would complement the Voi-Mwatate-Taveta metre gauge currently being rehabilitated. Mwadime called on the State to speed up the rehabilitation of the once-neglected railway line and the Ikanga Airstrip in Voi town to boost the local economy. Ms Abuga said the county is among devolved units along the Nairobi-Mombasa highway with increased passenger and freight services, which will help raise the standards of the Coastal people to improve their lives. Kibaara said Voi town will now be a major tourist destination. The administrator stated that railway transport was cheap and reliable compared to expensive road transport. He noted that the cross-border trade activities will now progress and businesses continue to grow in the region and the entire Coastal region at large. A member of the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry Kenneth Zenge said rail services are the only cheaper means of transport and its revival will play a big role in transforming the lives of the local community. [Read more](#)



**TUESDAY 7TH FEBRUARY, 2023**



## Cost Of Electricity Set To Rise In April

The cost of electricity is set to go up in April if a proposal by Kenya Power to review tariffs is approved by the Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority (EPRA). The retail tariff application (2023-2026) which Kenya Power has presented on behalf of other players in the energy sector will see the cost of power for domestic consumers go up by between 13-20 per cent. In the new tariffs which are inclusive of levies and taxes, Kenya Power has separated the 8.7 million domestic customers into two life-line consumption bands (0-30 and 30-100 kilowatt-hours). This is a departure from the current arrangement where all the domestic consumers are in one band, 0-100 kwh. Consumers under the new life-line consumption band of below 30 kwh per month will pay Sh20.5 per unit up from the current Sh18.14 signifying a 13 percent increase. Kenya Power General Manager in charge of Power Planning and Purchase John Mbutia said out of the Sh20.5, Sh14 is the consumption charge meaning Sh6.5 will go towards taxes and levies. According to Mbutia, if the new tariff proposals are approved, ordinary.

[Read more](#)



**SATURDAY 11TH FEBRUARY, 2023**



## KNCCI urges counties to address tax overcharge on exports-imports



Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) has urged counties to harmonise on levies to avoid overcharging traders when exporting and importing goods. This follows complaints by traders that they part with lots of money in form of cess and levies that is expensive. Richard Ngatia the president of KNCCI said double taxation by counties is hurting trade within the Kenyan market. Ngatia spoke in Malindi during a meeting with the National Governing Council, Directors of KNCCI from the Coastal region to brief them about a meeting that took place between the private sector(KNCCI), Kenya Association of Manufacturers, KEPSA, and the Senate standing committee of Trade, and Cabinet Secretaries. “The complaints that we have as traders is the so-called double taxation, that is we pay tax twice if you want to move your goods from Coast to Nairobi or other areas you pay double or thrice,” he said. He said they want the counties also to look into the issue of cess so that it can also be harmonised. “As Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry we really work with the government but at the same time advocate for our members where we think that business is going wrong for example laws in pending bills, laws in making sure bottlenecks are removed so that businesses can go,” he said. [Read more](#)



**FRIDAY 17TH FEBRUARY, 2023**



## Grassroots business fund targets over half a million small businesses

Over half a million small businesses are set to benefit from a funding of up to Sh10 million in the next five years to build resilience. This is after Mastercard Foundation partnered with the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) and the Grassroots Business Fund (GBF). The arrangement involves access to financial and non-financial products for micro small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Kenya and will see businesses receive between Sh10,000 and Sh10 million for resilience for consecutive five years. The fund will be managed by the Grassroots Business Fund team led by its global chief executive Harold Rosen who is in the country to fine-tune the details with the Chamber. Following a meeting with KNCCI President Richard Ngatia, Rosen – who is based in the US – hailed the chamber for its dynamism in supporting MSMEs. “This initiative is crucial for the fact that many startups find it hard to go beyond one year upon initial funding. The programme will help sustain such businesses and strengthen their financial standing so that they are able to qualify for higher credit,” said Ngatia. The two discussed partnership areas in women-led and youth-led startups with the emphasis being on access to affordable and appropriate finance and capacity building through training. [Read more](#)



**SATURDAY 18TH FEBRUARY, 2023**

## KNCCI President Richard Ngatia leads series of trade talks



The Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) President Richard Ngatia has continued with his efforts to bolster the trade environment with a series of meetings with different stakeholders. On Friday, Ngatia held talks with the senior leadership from Diamond Trust Bank (DTB) who paid him a courtesy call even as the Chamber president continues with his efforts to ensure the trade environment in Kenya has been propelled. Ngatia hosted Dr. Kennedy Nyakomitta, the Diamond Trust Bank Director of Sales, and Ms. Joan Keke who is the Bank's Business Development and Asset Finance Manager. The visit follows the recent event where DTB hosted a delegation that traveled to Kinshasa, DRC for a Pre-briefing breakfast session. The deliberations centered on areas of collaboration and partnership between the KNCCI and DTB Group Bank that will include among others Investor. Inbound missions, Special Tailored Programs that will target MSME, SME, and Women as well as the area of Sponsorship of Signature Events, and Business Networking Forums. The key sectors which were identified for collaboration include the health sector infrastructure, equipment, education, agribusiness including manufacturing, Processing, farmer solutions, and value and ICT and technology. [Read more](#)

**TUESDAY 21ST FEBRUARY, 2023**

## Counties hindering free trade with double taxation



One of the major concerns raised by various stakeholders during recent consultative engagements with the Senate Committee on Trade was the high cost of transporting goods in the country. Stakeholders, including our members, voiced concerns about the multiple cesses and other secondary taxes slapped on cargo in transit. For instance, if you are moving cargo from Mombasa to Nairobi, each county subjects transporters to cess. During our meeting, also attended by the Cabinet Secretary for Cooperatives and SMEs Simon Chelugui and his Tourism counterpart Peninah Malonza, we detailed how this double or treble taxation is hindering the smooth flow of goods to markets.

Whilst recognising the need for counties to raise revenues through such levies, it should not be done in a way that compromises the movement of goods, resulting in higher prices for consumers as traders pass on the extra cost to them. According to Harvard Historian and scholar Albert Bushnell Hart, taxation is the price which civilised communities pay for the opportunity to remain civilised. With higher retail prices, demand for goods shrinks, lowering demand and supply for goods with the resultant effect of constricting the economy. [Read more](#)



**THURSDAY 2ND MARCH, 2023**



## Chamber boss pitches for Kenya trade in Colombia



The head of Kenya's main business group on Thursday pushed for increased trade between Kenya and South America amid calls for direct flights between Nairobi and the region. The Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) president Richard Ngatia says much trade has been realised between Kenya and more than 450 million people in the South American market. Official data does not capture trade between the two regions with Kenyan exports to South America being below Sh1.5 billion in 2021. "With a growing economy, a young workforce that is tech-savvy and a supportive government, Kenya is an attractive investment destination," he said at the International Chambers Conference in Colombia. He cited Kenya's East Africa Community membership with a population of 466 million people, Comesa with a population of 560 million and Africa Free Trade Area with a population of 1.3 billion people. Mr Ngatia held talks with Colombia Vice President Francia Marquez on the need for stronger trade ties between the two countries. [Read more](#)



**FRIDAY 3RD MARCH, 2023**



## Kenya eyes deeper trade ties with South America

Kenya and South American nations are pushing for deeper trade ties with participants at the ongoing International Chambers Conference pursuing areas of partnership. This is as Colombia's Vice President Francia Márquez called for direct flights between his country and Kenya. The blending of Kenyan and Colombian tea and Coffee to develop a superior hybrid for the Caribbean market was also among the discussions.



“We have a lot to share in common and our trade can be enhanced by opening direct flights between Bogota and Colombia,” said Ms Márquez. Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) President Richard Ngatia, held talks with Ms Márquez when he attended the conference as a general council member of the World Chambers Federation (WCF). [Read more](#)



**SATURDAY 11TH MARCH, 2023**



## Kakamega County Plans To Upgrade Houses In Slums

The County Government of Kakamega will undertake a programme of upgrading houses in slum areas of Kakamega, Mumias town and other municipalities in addition to the affordable housing programme. The County Executive Committee Member (CECM) for Lands, Housing, Urban areas and Physical Planning Peninah Mukabane said the county government will utilize Appropriate or Alternative Building Material Technology (ABMT) and Interlocking Stabilized Soil Blocks Technology (ISSBT) in the project. “Although we have improved infrastructure in terms of roads, electricity and water in the informal settlements through the World Bank, the houses are still pathetic. You will still find mud houses, houses with very old corrugated iron sheets and we don’t want that kind of picture within the Municipality,” she noted. The program will start with the slums of Maraba, Masingo, Mudiri and Amalemba before extending to other slum areas in other towns and municipalities. The CECM was speaking during the Kakamega Real Estate Breakfast meeting bringing together players in the Real Estate Themed Leveraging Affordable Housing Opportunities. Kakamega is a rapidly growing town with an urban population of about 207, 885, which has put pressure on the housing units. The town has a deficit of 5000 housing units. [Read more](#)



**MONDAY 13TH MARCH, 2023**



## Eldoret Attaining City Status

Eldoret Municipality has reached the investment attraction phase in its historic journey to be conferred into the country’s fifth city. Eldoret being the gateway to the northern transit corridor and gateway to East Africa Community, a 7-member states’ body with a total consumerism of 300 million people, has earned the town a great potential in both agriculture and industry within the context of its commerce sector which includes not only trade but also services and manufacturing.



The town has earned a huge boost by being headquarters of the North Rift Economic bloc (NOREB) which comprises of a number of counties which include Baringo, Elgeyo Marakwet, Nandi, Samburu, Trans Nzoia, Turkana, Uasin Gishu and West Pokot. Most of the people from the region carry out several businesses in Eldoret town promoting its commercial status. In an interview with the Kenya News Agency, Eldoret Municipality Manager Tito Koiyet pointed out that Eldoret is one of the fast-growing towns in Kenya at a rate of about 5.1 per cent to 5.2 per annum in comparison to the national average of about 3.7 per cent. He commended the presence of an international airport, national referral hospital, and educational facilities like Moi and University of Eldoret universities as key to the attainment of city status.

[Read more](#)



**MONDAY 13TH MARCH, 2023**



## Booming Eldoret on fast track to become Kenya's fifth city



Eldoret Municipality has reached the investment attraction phase in its historic journey to be conferred status as Kenya's fifth city. Eldoret is the gateway to the northern transit corridor and gateway to the East Africa Community with 300 million people. Eldoret has great potential in agriculture and industry and strong services and manufacturing. The town is headquarters of the North Rift Economic bloc (Noreb) which comprises Baringo, Elgeyo Marakwet, Nandi, Samburu, Trans Nzoia, Turkana, Uasin Gishu and West Pokot. People from the region carry out several businesses in Eldoret town, promoting its commercial status. In an interview with the Kenya News Agency, Eldoret Municipality Manager Tito Koiyet said Eldoret is one of the fastest-growing towns in Kenya. The rate is about 5.1 per cent to 5.2 per annum in comparison to the national average of about 3.7 per cent. Koiyet affirmed that the journey of elevation into city status has accelerated interest from investors in the field of manufacturing, agro-processing, hospitality and logistics. "Eldoret is a logistics hub, being one of the few towns in Kenya which are privileged to have an international airport, railway line, trunk roads like the A8 road crossing the heart of the town," he said. [Read more](#)



**TUESDAY 14TH MARCH, 2023**



## Firms eye joint ventures to grow exports to Malaysia



Kenyan firms are eyeing an increased share of the Malaysian market by collaborating with companies from Southeast Asian countries in processing primary products before exporting. Malaysian investors on Monday held a trade forum with Kenyan businesses with sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing as having the potential for joint ventures and public-private partnerships (PPPs). “We want to see increased exports to Malaysia and narrow the trade deficit between Kenya and Malaysia. We are looking at partnering with Malaysian firms to help us increase exports to their market as well as Africa,” said Richard Ngatia, the president of the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI). Firms from the two countries are also exploring partnerships in areas such as agro-processing, value addition, manufacturing, ICT, affordable housing, telemedicine and tourism. Official data shows Kenya’s imports from Malaysia more than doubled to Sh93.75 billion in 2021 from Sh45.56 billion in the previous year, even as exports fell from Sh1.99 billion to Sh1.86 billion. [Read more](#)



**THURSDAY 16TH MARCH, 2023**



## SMEs advised to work with digital hubs

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have been encouraged to collaborate with digital hubs across the country to adopt technologies that can boost their growth. The Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) president Richard Ngatia said such linkages will support innovations by the youth and spur business growth for SMEs. “Such collaborations can potentially transform critical value chains in Kenya driving productivity, efficiency and competitiveness by creating market linkages and supply efficiencies that can help to unlock the full potential of this sector,” he told a forum for SMEs convened by the Nation Media Group (NMG). There are around 10 tech hubs in Kenya, including iHub, Nailab, Swahilipot Hub, Eldo Hub Innovation Centre, LakeHub, Nairobi Garage and Gearbox. A digital hub is a shared workspace for a range of complementary activities, including commercial businesses, the public sector as well as community organisations. The three-day SME conference and exposition organised in partnership with the KNCCI attracted 15,000 participants, which is more than double the 6,000 it attracted in 2020 when it was first run. [Read more](#)



**THURSDAY 16TH MARCH, 2023**



## Kenya signs MoU with Malaysia to boost bilateral trade

Kenya has signed a memorandum of understanding with Malaysia to boost bilateral trade between the two countries.



The two countries signed the agreement through their respective trade organizations; Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Kuala Lumpur and Selangor Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry at a Nairobi hotel on Wednesday. Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Richard Ngatia and his Kuala Lumpur counterpart Nivas Ragavan presided over the document's signing during an event dubbed "Kenya – Malaysia Business Forum." The event was attended by High Commissioner of Kenya to Malaysia Francis Muhoro, High Commissioner of Malaysia to Kenya Ruzaimi bin Mohamad, Bomet Governor Barchok, Malaysian Exporters Association President Kabur Ibrahim and Investment Promotion PS Abubakar Abubakar. Abubakar applauded the cordial relations Kenya and Malaysia had enjoyed since 1967 saying it had continued to broaden and deepen in all aspects of development. He said though the two countries share deep historical, commercial and cultural ties, their trade and investments were yet to be connected in a meaningful way. [Read more](#)



**FRIDAY 17TH MARCH, 2023**



## Consider capital markets for funds, small firms told

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have been tipped to consider alternative financing options through the capital markets to overcome credit obstacles limiting their growth.

Cooperatives and Micro and Small Enterprises Cabinet Secretary Simon Chelugui noted capital markets should strive to offer SMEs a range of instruments including debt and equity to increase their financing options. Alternative finance models such as business angel investments, crowd-funding platforms, venture capital and public equity offer flexible terms and conditions to beneficiaries. "I would like to challenge the SMEs to explore such alternative financial options," Mr Chelugui told a forum for Small and medium-sized enterprises SME convened by the Nation Media Group (NMG). A number of small and medium enterprises lack collateral for commercial bank loans thereby becoming perfect candidates for shylocks that eat out the profits they make. [Read more](#)



**SATURDAY 18TH MARCH, 2023**



## China ends visa curbs easing movement for Kenyan traders

Kenyan traders have obtained easier access to China after the world's second-largest economy reopened its borders to foreigners for the first time in three years since the Covid-19 pandemic erupted. Beijing on Tuesday allowed all categories of visas to be issued to foreigners.



The announcement is seen as a boon for Kenyan traders and manufacturers who previously faced travel hurdles at a time when China has cemented its position as the largest source market for Kenya's imports. The ease of travel is expected to boost trade between the two countries, Kenyan traders and business lobbies, reckoned yesterday. "The removal of travel restrictions in China could have several benefits for economies like Kenya, including increased trade, tourism, availability of the dollar, and economic growth," said Richard Ngatia, the president of the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) in response to queries by Standard Business. [Read more](#)



**TUESDAY 21ST MARCH, 2023**



## Calm reported in Coast, Mt Kenya and North Rift

The Coast, Mt Kenya and North Rift regions remained relatively calm with most residents going about their activities yesterday. In Mombasa, a handful of protesters who attempted to access the town's Central Business District (CBD) were repulsed by the police. Two women who were riding on motorbikes were arrested near Marikiti roundabout. A heavy police presence was witnessed in perceived violence hotspots including Kisauni, Bangladesh slums in Jomvu, Likoni and Nyali but there was calm. No protests were witnessed in Taita Taveta, Kwale, Kilifi, Lamu and Tana River counties despite a visit by Azimio leaders Raila Odinga, Martha Karua and Kalonzo Musyoka at the Coast one week ago. Local MPs and other political leaders were yesterday reported to be in Nairobi attending the mass action there. "Demonstrations will not give starving residents food. Locals are busy concentrating on their daily chores to bring food to the table," stated Taveta Deputy County Commissioner Joseph Mericho. Calm was witnessed in major towns in the North Rift with business activities going on uninterrupted. Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) Uasin Gishu County branch chairman, Mr Willy Kenei and his Nandi counterpart Samuel Seroney, said peace prevailed in Eldoret and Kapsabet towns respectively. They, however, fear that the mass action witnessed in Nairobi could have a negative impact on the economy in other areas. [Read more](#)



**WEDNESDAY 22ND MARCH, 2023**



## New platform to link women traders with markets

More than 200,000 women traders from across East Africa will be benefit from a new platform that seeks to link them with the markets for their products.



The Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI), Canada and Trademark Africa joint initiative will be undertaken through iSOKO, a platform designed to support women traders in accessing information and selling their produce. Obstacles ranging from limited access to credit facilities, labour and skill gaps, exclusion from key networks, as well as social and legal constraints often hit women. According to TradeMark Africa chief of programmes, Allen Asimwe, women will now be able to identify the regions their markets are based to enable them make better business decisions. “So far we have reached 3,700 traders who have signed up but we look to reach 20,000 traders across Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi being the first pilot by December of 2023,” said Asimwe. However, the platform is yet to include a currency or mode of payment that cuts across the countries. [Read more](#)

 **THURSDAY 23RD MARCH, 2023**



## Trademark Africa, KNCCI Unveil Online Platform Targeting Women Traders



Trademark Africa (TMA) in partnership with Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) through the support of Global Affairs Canada, has launched an integrated information platform, iSOKO designed to support women in trade across East Africa. iSOKO will help women access and use vital and simplified information, which will in turn unlock opportunities for participation, formalization of businesses and growth in trade value. The web and mobile platform will also provide a regional marketplace to buy and sell goods, access vital trade and market information, business management tools including bookkeeping, access to verified service providers and networking opportunities with fellow traders. “Having women at the center is how we do development, foreign policy and trade. It is effective, and helps us to meet our development objectives,” said Canadian High Commissioner to Kenya Christopher Thornley. He added that iSOKO will go a long way in addressing the key market and information gaps that exist for women traders in cross-border trade. Thornley stated that the platform, which was unveiled in Nairobi, will serve to bring together women traders from five countries in the East African Community – Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi. Also speaking at the event, KNCCI President Richard Ngatia, noted that the platform is already attracting great use by traders in the country. “Through our County chamber and Women in Business arm, we have 2,650 users on board the platform with information on over 100 commodities uploaded, we expect the numbers to grow significantly after this launch” said Ngatia. [Read more](#)

# MEDIA PICTORIALS

## 1st Quarter January - March 2023

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### Over 60 Kenyan business leaders in DRC to scout for trade deals

- Mineral-rich DRC recently joined the EAC unlocking a massive trade potential.
- Kenyan delegation wants the country to ease visa requirements.

#### STANDARD REPORTER

A delegation of over 60 Kenyan business persons has visited the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to look into opportunities for trade and investments in the mineral-rich country which recently joined the East Africa Community (EAC).

The trade mission was organised by the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) in collaboration with the East Africa Chamber of Commerce and Industry (EACCCI), the Embassy of Kenya in DRC and the Federation of Congolese Enterprises (FEC).

The business leaders participated in a trade conference where various speakers highlighted business opportunities in sectors including mining, infrastructure, agriculture, healthcare, ICT, Tourism and financial services.

Additionally, delegates benefited from presentations by industry experts to help them understand the market analysis, compliance requirements and investment outlook in both countries.

"I laud the entry of DRC into the East African Community (EAC) bloc as a great win for the region, especially with DRC's vast wealth of minerals and

wood as key raw materials for manufacturing and assembly industries in Kenya and the region," said KNCCI President Richard Ngatia.

Ngatia is also the Chair of the ICGIR Private Sector Forum which has Kenya and DRC among the 12 member States.

The Chair of the Council of Governors (COG) Trade Committee and Machakos Governor Wawinya Ndeti pledged the support of the COG in strengthening Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) participation in cross-border trade.

She detailed the many products with comparative advantages between the two countries that could drive the exchange of goods and services.

Two governors, Dr Erick Mutai of Kericho and Jobabu Irungu of Laikipia were also part of the trade mission with Dr Mutai encouraging partnership in tea value addition and packaging.

Also part of the business delegation was Senate Speaker Amason Kingi and senators Catherine Mumma (nominated) and Veronica Maina (Murang'a).

Starehe MP Amos Mwangi appreciated the collaboration between the Chambers of Commerce and requested that DRC policymakers consider easing visa requirements to enhance movement and trade between the two nations.

The Secretary General to the President of DRC S.E Jean Tshishima emphasised the important role of trade and economic empowerment towards achieving peace and security in the DRC.

"This conference is an indication



Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Richard Ngatia (left) with Machakos Governor Wawinya Ndeti at DRC whom he led a delegation of 60 Business men for prospects in the mineral-rich country.

that DRC is open to business and is walking with East African neighbours to build a strong economic region," he said.

Speaking at the event, Kenyan Ambassador to the DRC George Masira applauded the conference as an indicator of progressive regional integration.

Participants also discussed practical ways of benefiting the DRC with trade and investment opportunities and technical know-how from other countries with the aim to decrease gradually the illicit exploitation and trade of natural resources.

This will address the root causes of instability in the eastern DRC and the region.

Discussions focused on issues such as exploring the multiple opportunities available in the DRC, deepening intra-regional trade, exploring new trade opportunities offered by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), expanding the market base, business matchmaking and networking, and market information.

The Kenyan business executives were given the opportunity to visit factories in food processing and manufacturing for learning and benchmarking.

"Let us generate value from the net-

works and information acquired during the mission. Your participation has significantly enhanced the visibility and capability of our business sector," said Mr Ngatia at the end of the three-day event.

The Office of the United Nations Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region, in line with the regional strategy pillar on strengthening trade and investment to support lasting peace and sustainable development, also participated at the conference.

The office also provided technical and financial support to the mission, including sponsoring five women entrepreneurs from Burundi, Tanzania, and DRC to partake and exhibit their products during the conference.

The East African region is one of the fastest-growing economic blocs in Africa. The accession of the DRC into the East African Community in April 2022 has increased the region's gross domestic product (GDP) from \$193 billion (\$239 trillion) to \$240 (297 trillion) and its consumer market from 177 million to 260 million people.

The DRC joined the East African Community in April 2022 as the body's seventh member.

sew@ekn.com | standard@ekn.co.ke

**“**This conference is an indication that DRC is open to business and is walking with East African neighbours to build a strong economic region.”

S.E Jean Tshishima, Secretary General to the President of DRC

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2023 The Standard

### Fund targets over half a million small businesses



Grassroots Business Fund CEO Esther Dhanraj (left) meets with Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Richard Ngatia (left) and other officials when she was in Nairobi yesterday. (Caption)

Financiers reckon that most startups fail shortly after starting owing to poor support.

Entrepreneurs will also benefit from a pool of experts offering technical assistance.

ESTHER DHANRAJ, GRDF:

Over half a million small businesses are set to benefit from a tapping of up to \$100 million in the next five years to build resilience.

This is after Mastercard Foundation partnered with the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) and the Grassroots Business Fund (GRDF).

The arrangement involves access to financial and non-financial products for micro-small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Kenya and will see businesses receive between \$10,000 and \$100,000 for resilience for consecutive five years.

The fund will be managed by the Grassroots Business Fund team led by its global chief executive Harold Rosen who is in the country to finalize the details with the Chamber.

Following a meeting with KNCCI President Richard Ngatia, Rosen - who is based in the US - lauded the chamber for its dynamism in supporting MSMEs.

"This initiative is crucial for the fact that many startups find it hard to go beyond one year upon initial funding. The programme will

help sustain such businesses and strengthen their financial standing so that they are able to qualify for higher credit," said Ngatia.

The two discussed partnership areas in women led and youth led startups with the emphasis being on access to affordable and appropriate finance and capacity building through training.

Both organisations seek to address the funding gap existing in the value chain by pairing up financial support with well-tailored technical assistance, and a hands-on coordination strategy for businesses.

"This is geared towards effecting positive behaviour change and resource flow by creating digital tools to improve business process automation and incorporation of technology."

"As a chamber, we are ready to ensure a conducive business environment and build business capacity," said Ngatia, for committed to avoid

ing a membership base of general youth and women-led businesses for handling and coming up with sustainable trade support activities that will ensure that the objectives are achieved.

Rosen said that his organisation aims to economically empower high-impact MSMEs whose business models are to increase income and at the same time lower costs in business communities especially in Africa, Asia and Latin America by providing investment capital and access to technical assistance services.

Since 2004 GRDF has managed \$100 billion from government agencies and private financial institutions and investors.

"By supporting inclusive MSMEs that create opportunity for millions of thousands of people from under-served communities, GRDF contributes to poverty alleviation and economic growth for vulnerable regions who are accompanied by GRDF's Africa Head of Strategy (Lizette Mwanza), among other officials during the meeting at Chamber offices in Nairobi.

While meeting sessions had been on the orientation of the Chamber, Rosen said that the Chamber's double taxation as a major concern to MSMEs, which is a barrier to growth, was a key topic for discussion.

"The complaints we have as a trade association are to have goods from the Coast to Nairobi and in some areas, we pay three times," said Ngatia, [en@standardmedia.co.ke](mailto:en@standardmedia.co.ke)

**“**This initiative is crucial for the fact that many startups find it hard to go beyond one year upon initial funding. It will help sustain such businesses and strengthen their financial standing.”

Richard Ngatia, KNCCI President

## Counties hindering free trade with double taxation

Richard Ngatia, President, Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry



One of the major concerns raised by various stakeholders during recent consultative engagements with the Senate Committee on Trade was the high cost of transporting goods in the country.

Stakeholders, including our members, voiced concerns about the multiple cesses and other secondary taxes slapped on cargo in

transit. For instance, if you are moving cargo from Mombasa to Nairobi, each county subjects transporters to cess. During our meeting, also attended by the Cabinet Secretary for Cooperatives and SMEs Simon Chelugui and his Tourism counterpart Peninah Malonza, we detailed how this double or treble taxation is hindering the smooth flow of goods to markets.

Whilst recognising the need for counties to raise revenues through such levies, it should not be done in a way that compromises the movement of goods, resulting in higher

prices for consumers as traders pass on the extra cost to them.

According to Harvard Historian and scholar Albert Bushnell Hart, taxation is the price which civilised communities pay for the opportunity to remain civilised. With higher retail prices, demand for goods shrinks, lowering demand and supply for goods with the resultant effect of constricting the economy.

The symptomatic long-term effect of increased taxation is less money in circulation, reduced employment opportunities and lower savings and investments. The grav-

ity of these taxes couldn't have been expressed better at a meeting led by Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) coastal regional coordinator Hassan Wario as well as the Chamber's Kilifi chapter chairman Majid Swaleh.

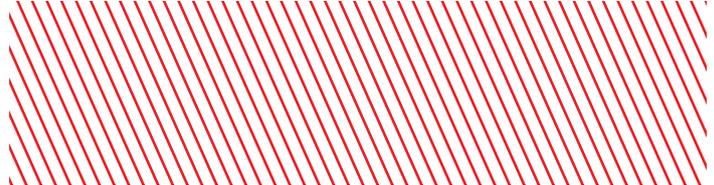
The meeting, which was attended also by Council members from Lamu, Tana River, Kwale and Taita Taveta, resolved to help governors and trade executives to harmonise taxes and cess charges across the counties. Our proposal is to have parliament review the prohibitive laws that have facilitated multiple

cess collections. We commend President William Ruto's efforts to create a conducive environment for businesses to thrive. But double taxation will undo all the hard work in improving the business environment. When the President graced our Annual General Meeting (AGM) last year, he left no doubt his administration supports investment.

This week, I will be attending the World Chamber Federation (WCF) AGM in Bogota, Colombia as its Executive Council member. This is an opportunity to market Kenya as a prime investment destination.

# MEDIA PICTORIALS

## 1st Quarter January - March 2023



24 THE STAR.CO.KE Saturday, February 11, 2023

### COUNTY FEATURE



## End double taxation to prosper traders, KNCCI urges counties

Ngatia says they pay tax twice to move goods from Coast to Nairobi, thrice in other areas

**NAIROBI** Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Richard Ngatia has urged counties to end double taxation of traders to prosper the business sector.

Ngatia said the counties are taxing goods twice to move them from the coast to Nairobi, and thrice in other areas.

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### TREE COVER

## Taita Taveta set to pilot urban forestry development project

SOLIHUN MUMBO: The Taita Taveta county has been entrusted among the counties targeted for the urban forestry development pilot project.

The project is set to be implemented in the county's urban areas.

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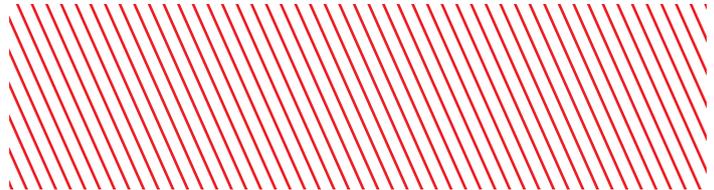
Thursday, March 16, 2023 News



## Small firms urged to adopt technology

Kenya National Federation of JuaKali Associations Chief Executive Officer Richard Muteti (left) confers with Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Richard Ngatia during opening ceremony of the 4th edition of the SMEs Conference and Expo held at the KICC grounds yesterday. The three-day expo is themed Accelerating the SMEs growth through adoption of technology and innovation.

FRANCIS NDEITU





# MEDIA PICTORIALS

1st Quarter January - March 2023

DAILY NATION TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 2023

7

**THEME** Accelerating the MSMEs Growth through Adoption of Technology and Innovation

Strategic Partners

**HOST**  
**Mr. Stephen Gitagama**  
Group Chief Executive Officer  
Nation Media Group Plc

**SPEAKER**  
**Mr. Simon Chelugui E.G.H.**  
Cabinet Secretary  
Ministry of Co-operatives and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Development

**SPEAKER**  
**Hon. Moses Kuria**  
Cabinet Secretary  
Ministry of Investments, Trade and Industry

**SPEAKER**  
**Mr. Richard Ngatia**  
Chamber President  
The Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCT)

**SPEAKER**  
**Mr. Richard Muteti**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Kenya National Federation of Jua Kali Associations

**SPEAKER**  
**Ms. Doreen Mbaya Ariwi**  
Founder  
Karembou Limited

**SPEAKER**  
**Mr. Vinay Kumar Rathi**  
Managing Director  
Bank of Baroda Kenya Ltd.

**SPEAKER**  
**Dr. Gamaliel Hassan**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Stima Sacco

**SPEAKER**  
**Eng. Mike Mutungi**  
Chief Executive Officer  
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**Key event features**

1 Exhibition 2 Networking Session 3 Thematic Breakout Sessions  
4 County Pavilion 5 Kenya MSMEs Square

15<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> March 2023

KICC Courtyard, Nairobi

8:00 a.m – 5:00 p.m

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wkariuki@ke.nationmedia.com | agoko@ke.nationmedia.com | wamukati@ke.nationmedia.com

# MEDIA PICTORIALS

## 1st Quarter January - March 2023

### National News

#### Conference SMEs also lack security in the form of collateral, making them the perfect candidates for shylocks

Hurdles SMEs face in accessing funding become obstacles to poverty reduction and economic progress, says CS



BY ALBERT MWAZIGHE

Kenya has enjoyed three decades of a state of peace...

From left, Nation Media Group General Manager Cornelius James Ngunjiri, Nation Media Group CEO Richard Ngatia, KNCII President Richard Ngatia, Co-operations and MSME National Federation of Kenya Associations CEO Richard Mutiso arrive for the second day of the SME Conference and Expo at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre in Nairobi yesterday. PHOTO BY NICHOLAS OBI/NAIROBI

## State seeks further funding for micro, small businesses

Micro and Small Enterprises Authority CEO Henry Rithika makes his remarks yesterday.

Micro and Small Enterprises Authority CEO Henry Rithika...

small businesses. Some of these large organisations were seen...

MSME sector drives the economy... Our future lies in the promotion of small businesses...

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MSME sector drives the economy... Our future lies in the promotion of small businesses...

**MINISTRY OF HEALTH  
PHARMACY AND POISONS BOARD**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**NOTICE FOR THE MAY 2023 PROFESSIONAL EXAMS**

The Pharmacy and Poisons Board will conduct the short Pre-Registration exams (Stage I & II) and Pre-Examination exams (Level I & II) from 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2023.

The exams will be administered online, in the respective examination centres.

Each candidate should:

1. Make an application to the PFB online services portal. The application deadline will be 21<sup>st</sup> April, 2023.
2. Select their preferred examination center. The exam centers are subject to change and candidates must regularly check the portal prior to the exam for any changes.
3. Create a suitable computer device with internet access, fully charged, and which can store power for at least 1 hour.

There will be mock exams to test and familiarise with the PFB online examination portal. The dates for the mock exams will be communicated in due course. The mock exams will be done at home.

Candidates with a disability or health issue that may affect their ability to sit for online exams must immediately notify the Board in writing, together with supporting medical evidence.

Any feedback or queries can be sent by e-mail to [training@pharmacyboardkenya.org](mailto:training@pharmacyboardkenya.org)

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

The third edition attracted over 150 exhibitors and over 15,000 participants

# NMG to host 4th edition of SMEs Conference and Expo

Event seeks to promote the inclusion of small enterprises at the county and national level and prepare them for sustainable green business

BY ALBERT MWAZIGHE

The Nation Media Group in collaboration with the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCII) will hold the 4th Edition of the SMEs Conference and Expo on 15th-17th March 2023 at KICC, Nairobi.

enterprises and multinational companies. The expo will seek to motivate and inspire home-grown businesses to aim for excellence in their products and services...

The inaugural SMEs Conference and Expo was held in February 2020 at KICC, under the theme, Powering SMEs. The conference attracted 6,000 participants...

The 2nd edition, convened under the theme, Resilience, Recovery and Sustainability. It examined the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on SMEs and what needed to be done to build future resilience...

The 3rd edition, held in March 2022 under the theme, Making the SMEs Sector Competitive Amid Covid-19 + A multi-stakeholder Approach, attracted over 150 exhibitors and over 15,000 participants.

The 2023 SMEs Expo and Conference is expected to host at least 150 exhibitors and over 15,000 participants while also involving a number of strategic partners including government institutions, development partners, local and international companies.

"The Micro and Small Enterprise sector has been identified as the backbone of economic development in Kenya accounting for 24 percent of the country's gross domestic product, over 90 percent of private sector enterprises and 23 percent of the total labor force, thus recognising the significant role played by SMEs in the National Agenda," noted Mr. Gitagana.

This year's expo also seeks to examine and promote SMEs' inclusion in the county and national level, as well as empower the SMEs for sustainable green business.

Ultimately, the expo is expected to create a greater awareness of the role entrepreneurs play in society and also encourage and inspire potential entrepreneurs.



Laura Ochieng showcasing her kibebo bags, which she produces under the Mama Mosh Crafts brand. CINDASH OCEGIA / NATION

# MEDIA PICTORIALS

1st Quarter January - March 2023

## National News

**Conference** Digital technologies in business processes will enable SMEs to grow into big organisations, says NMG boss



Dr Richard Ngatia, Mr Stephen Gitagama, Mr Richard Muteti, Mr Robert Manyala

## Help SMEs adopt tech, State urged

While many SMEs are willing to adopt digital technologies to grow their businesses, a lot of them face a myriad of challenges

BY ALBERT MWAIZIGHE

The government, through the Ministry of Cooperatives and Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, has been urged to work closely with stakeholders in the SME sub-sector to create an enabling environment for the adoption of digital technologies by small businesses.

Speaking on the first day of the fourth Nation Media Group SME Conference and Expo yesterday, Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) president Richard Ngatia said while many SMEs are willing to adopt digital technologies to grow their businesses, a lot of them face a myriad of challenges that prevent them from integrating ICT into their systems. Top on the list is lack of access to affordable and reliable internet and other essential infrastructure.

**Digital operations**  
"It is important to create an enabling environment that supports the adoption of digital technologies by SMEs. This will not only create jobs and economic opportunities but also contribute to the development of a vibrant and innovative digital ecosystem," noted Dr Ngatia.

He noted that SMEs face limited capacity in terms of human resources, expertise and skills, needed to run digital operations. This, he said, can be addressed by leveraging on digital hubs which provide digital training and con-



Ms Solon Chebet of Solon Honey arranges jars of honey sourced from Baringo County during the Nation Media Group SMEs Conference and Expo in Nairobi yesterday. FRANCIS NDERITU / NATION

tributions to sustain their operations, they suffer from limited funding, which affects their ability to serve SMEs.

"For example, there are many programmes that KNCCI in partnership with development partners has started to support SMEs in terms of capacity building, ICT training and skills transfer. We can only sustain such programmes for about a year. Once a programme ends, you're left wondering what you are going to tell the beneficiary," noted Dr Ngatia, who added that the government, through the National Treasury, can fund existing digital hubs through subsidies or public-private partnerships.

"The government and private sector should work together to develop innovative financing mechanisms that are tailored to the needs of youths and small businesses," noted Dr Ngatia.

He called for a more robust public-private partnership in order to create better linkages between SMEs and critical value chains so as to facilitate scaling of locally made products. He also called on the government to digitise the tendering process to make it easier for youth and women-led businesses access the

### ECONOMY

Digital platforms big contributors



Proportion of GDP the economy will generate from digital platforms by 2025. This is much higher than the continental average of 5.2 per cent.

30 per cent of government procurement opportunities set aside for them.

"If you are an SME in Nairobi for instance and you want to apply for a tender with the County Government of Kiambu, it becomes very expensive because you have to deliver hard copy documents in Kiambu. This also limits the number of tenders an SME can apply for," noted Dr Ngatia.

His words were echoed by Nation Media Group CEO Stephen Gitagama, who further said the use of digital technologies in business processes will enable SMEs to grow into larger organisations with greater impact. A study by the Nation Media Group on the top 100 mid-sized companies in the country shows that 57 per cent of the companies that invested in digital transformation after the Covid-19 pandemic, each witnessed a major jump in earnings.

"I remember back in my junior years, one had to plan for how they would get to the market to purchase whatever they needed. Each month, you would go to the market maybe twice or three because the markets were very far. Then over the years, the shops came closer to our homes. As we speak now, because of technology and innovation, you can order whatever you need and have it delivered wherever you are at any time," noted Mr Gitagama.

The Nation Media Group has been at the forefront in embracing digital transformation, with a lot of its content accessible to audiences online and in real time.

"The growth of the SME sub-sector has a direct impact on the productivity of our country. That is why we, as a company, are committed to ensuring that there is growth and development of this sector through digital adoption," Mr Gitagama said, adding, the company plans to bring the SME conference and expo to the counties to reach more businesses.

Kenya National Federation of Bus Kalli Associations head Richard Muteti said all the stakeholders, including government, private sector and academic and research institutions, should work with SMEs to provide information and technical support that is needed to produce quality products. Collaboration will also minimise duplication and wastage of resources.

"Lack of technology and innovation can be linked to poor workmanship. We need to assist our people because others come to our country see the products that are popular here, and make more superior products. Because they have the capacity they will sell to retailers such as supermarkets at a lower price," Mr Muteti said.

Kenya's economy is expected to generate 9.24 per cent of her total GDP from digital platforms by 2025. This is much higher than the continental average of 5.2 per cent.

**Boost their reach**  
Mr Robert Manyala, who runs ICT firm Robosearch Ltd, said supporting the digital transformation will enable SMEs, which often do not have the big budgets or resources to put up marketing campaigns, to leverage on new technologies to boost their reach, and by extension, their earnings.

"The demand for service providers such as plumbers, caterers, electricians and cleaners is very high. Most people go online to search for these services. However, most artisans lack an online presence, making it difficult for them to compete with bigger companies," said Mr Manyala.

The fourth edition of the Nation Media Group SME expo, whose theme is "Accelerating the MSMEs growth through adoption of technology and innovation", ends tomorrow.

[mwaibonujika.nationmedia.com](http://mwaibonujika.nationmedia.com)

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