

GLOBAL INSIGHTS REPORT

AI at the Board Level

From Oversight Literacy to Strategic Deployment

Date of Dialogue: 27 August 2026

Convened by: League of East African Directors (LEAD)

Concept, Initiation & Coordination: Stella Biira, Learning Coordinator, LEAD

Format: Global Virtual Panel Dialogue

1. Executive Summary

Artificial Intelligence is moving rapidly from the technology function into the centre of business strategy, organisational decision-making and corporate governance.

The question facing boards is therefore no longer whether AI will affect their organisations. It is how boards will govern that impact, capture its value and remain accountable for the consequences.

This was the central question explored during the *AI at the Board Level: From Oversight Literacy to Strategic Deployment* Global Board Dialogue convened by the League of East African Directors (LEAD) on 27 August 2026.

The dialogue brought together perspectives spanning board governance, enterprise risk, cybersecurity, strategy, technology, financial services, academia and digital psychology, with voices from Africa, Europe and the Middle East.

What emerged was not a call for boards to become technology experts, but to become AI-literate stewards: equipped to challenge management, understand changing risk, interrogate the value being created, establish clear accountability and ensure that technology remains aligned with organisational purpose.

The discussion also challenged the idea that AI success is simply about implementing more technology, reducing costs or automating more processes. True strategic value lies in understanding whether AI can fundamentally change how an organisation operates, whom it serves, how it creates value and how it competes.

At the same time, the dialogue brought the human dimension firmly into the conversation. AI adoption affects not only systems and processes, but also judgement, creativity, workforce confidence, skills, organisational culture and the future leaders of our institutions.

For Africa and other emerging markets, the message was particularly significant: there are opportunities to leapfrog in areas such as financial services, distribution and digital delivery, but governance cannot be leapfrogged.

The overarching conclusion was clear: The board's role is not to govern the technology itself. It is to govern the conditions under which technology creates value, manages risk and serves people.

2. The Conversation in Context

The dialogue opened with a practical reminder of how quickly AI can create board-level consequences.

A case was discussed in which a lawyer used a public AI tool to summarise a confidential client document, resulting in the loss of legal privilege and confidentiality. The significance of the example was not simply the technology involved. It was that the risk emerged through an **ordinary employee shortcut**, rather than an intentionally malicious act.

Source: Folu Adebayo, “**Tech and Humanity: The Tribunal Ruling That Should Change How Africa Thinks About AI**,” *The Boss Newspapers*, May 2026.

[Source: <https://thebossnewspapers.com/2026/05/23/tech-and-humanity-the-tribunal-ruling-that-should-change-how-africa-thinks-about-ai/>]

That distinction matters.

AI-related risk is no longer confined to major technology projects. It can arise through everyday decisions made by employees, vendors, customers and business units.

AI therefore intersects directly with the traditional responsibilities of the board: **strategy, risk, financial stewardship, cybersecurity, reputation, people and accountability**.

The audience poll reinforced the sense of transition. Of respondents, 26% indicated that their boards already had a formal AI governance framework, 42% said one was in progress, 21% said they did not have one, while 11% were unsure.

The message was not that every organisation needs the same governance structure. Rather, it was that **informal AI adoption is increasingly giving way to deliberate governance**.

3. Section III

3.1 Board AI Literacy: Knowing Enough to Ask Better Questions

One of the strongest areas of consensus was that directors do not need to become AI engineers. They do, however, need enough understanding to determine whether what management is telling them is true.

This is the real threshold for board-level AI literacy.

A director should be able to distinguish between management that genuinely understands how an AI system works, how it has been validated and where it can fail, and management that is simply repeating a technology vendor's claims.

The discussion also highlighted the importance of diversity of expertise at board level. AI cuts across technology, risk, ethics, law, operations, finance and stakeholder interests. A board with a broader mix of perspectives is therefore better positioned to apply a **360-degree lens** to AI-related decisions.

As Dr. Andrea Bonime-Blanc noted, boards increasingly need people who can ask the right questions from different professional and governance lenses, rather than relying predominantly on traditional financial and executive perspectives.

This is an important distinction: **AI literacy is not technical mastery. It is governance capability.**

It enables directors to ask:

- What is this system actually designed to do?
- What assumptions is it based on?
- How has it been tested?
- What can it get wrong?
- What does the data tell us?
- What does the data fail to tell us?
- What happens when the system fails?
- Who is accountable?

The Lesson from Klarna

The panel used Klarna as a particularly useful illustration of why these questions matter.

The company had reported significant gains from its AI-powered customer service initiative, including substantial volumes of interactions handled and potential cost savings. Yet, as the discussion highlighted, the headline measures focused heavily on speed and volume, while less visible indicators, such as the quality of complex customer interactions, customer satisfaction and repeat contact, were not adequately reflected.

The lesson for boards is not that AI efficiency measures are meaningless. It is that efficiency metrics can create a misleading picture when they are viewed without the wider performance context.

A literate board therefore does not only ask: “What is this dashboard telling us?”

It also asks: “What is this dashboard not telling us?”

That is a broader governance lesson. Good oversight requires directors to interrogate the blind spots behind headline numbers rather than simply accepting performance metrics at face value.

3.2 Governance Architecture: From the Boardroom to the Frontline

The question of AI literacy naturally leads to a deeper governance question:

Where does AI governance actually sit?

The discussion challenged the idea that AI governance can be housed exclusively within IT, cybersecurity or a dedicated technology committee.

AI is pervasive. It increasingly affects strategy, finance, operations, risk, cybersecurity, procurement, people, customers and external stakeholders.

A technology or innovation committee may have a role to play, but the responsibility cannot stop there. The board, management and frontline teams need to operate from a common governance framework.

Dr. Andrea Bonime-Blanc described this as an “**exponential governance mindset**” and emphasised the importance of “360-degree” technology governance: aligning what the board does, what management does and what frontline employees do so that the organisation is not operating through disconnected technology decisions.

This is particularly important as **Shadow AI** becomes more difficult to ignore, the use of AI tools by employees outside formally approved organisational channels.

The governance challenge is therefore not simply: “**Which AI systems have we approved?**”

It is also: “**How is AI actually being used across our organisation?**”

Boards should consequently consider:

- Who is accountable for AI across the organisation?
- How does AI oversight connect with existing risk and cybersecurity structures?
- What is the organisation's AI risk appetite?
- What reporting does the board receive?
- How are AI incidents escalated?
- What boundaries apply to employee use of AI?
- How are third-party AI systems governed?

The resulting governance architecture should connect:

Strategy → Risk → Technology → Data → Cybersecurity → Procurement → People → Stakeholders

The objective is not to create another isolated governance silo. It is to ensure that AI is governed as part of the organisation's broader strategic and risk environment.

3.3 Accountability: The Responsibility That Cannot Be Outsourced

Once governance architecture is established, the next question is more fundamental:

Who is accountable?

The dialogue highlighted an important distinction between having governance structures and having someone who is actually responsible for outcomes.

When an AI system makes a consequential decision, who is responsible?

When a model fails, who has the authority to intervene?

When a vendor's technology causes harm, where does accountability sit?

These questions become particularly important as organisations increasingly rely on third-party AI systems, cloud providers and external technology partners.

The principle is straightforward: **Outsourcing technology does not outsource accountability.**

The board must therefore have visibility into the dependencies surrounding AI, including:

- where organisational data is hosted;
- the quality and provenance of data being used;
- model performance and degradation;
- security arrangements;
- vendor and concentration dependencies;
- contractual protections; and
- what happens if a critical provider fails.

The panel also brought this accountability question directly into strategic deployment.

Mutisunge Zulu highlighted the importance of an accountable executive owner when an AI initiative moves beyond experimentation. A pilot can continue indefinitely when no one owns the business outcome. Strategic deployment requires a line executive who is prepared to take responsibility, establish a baseline, measure outcomes and make decisions about continuation or decommissioning.

That creates a much stronger governance chain:

Board oversight → Executive accountability → Measurable outcome → Decision to scale or switch off

The board should therefore ask not simply: **“Is the technology safe?”**

but also: **“Who is accountable when it is not, and who owns the outcome when it succeeds?”**

3.4 Cybersecurity Is Becoming Cyber Resilience

AI is changing the cybersecurity landscape from both sides.

On one side, AI can strengthen organisational defence by helping identify patterns, detect fraud, improve monitoring and support more predictive risk management.

On the other, the same capabilities can make attacks faster, more scalable and potentially more autonomous.

The panel highlighted that AI-enabled attacks are already increasing in speed and sophistication, while future developments may allow technology to amplify other emerging technologies and threat vectors.

This changes the board's responsibility.

Cybersecurity asks: How do we prevent the attack?

Cyber resilience asks: What happens when prevention fails?

Boards therefore need to think beyond technical controls and towards the organisation's ability to anticipate, withstand, respond to and recover from technology-related disruption.

This includes understanding risks arising from systems the organisation does not fully control, such as shared AI systems, cloud providers, third-party platforms and other critical technology dependencies.

It also requires a longer-term view.

As Dr. Nicolas Sabben emphasised, AI should not be considered in isolation. It is also an enabler of other emerging technologies, meaning that boards need governance capabilities capable of evolving alongside the technology landscape.

The board's responsibility is therefore both **present and forward-looking**:

- What risks are we managing today?
- What dependencies could create vulnerabilities tomorrow?
- How quickly can the organisation respond when assumptions change?
- Are we building resilience that will remain relevant beyond today's technology?

For boards, cyber resilience is increasingly becoming a strategic capability rather than simply a technical function.

3.5 From AI Pilots to Strategic Deployment

One of the most compelling discussions centred on the gap between experimentation and execution.

Many organisations have AI pilots. Far fewer successfully transition those pilots into meaningful enterprise deployment.

The reason is partly structural. A pilot is designed to be reversible. It can operate with internally defined targets, without a clear business owner and without a meaningful consequence if it ends.

Strategic deployment is different.

As Mutisunge Zulu emphasised, the transition from pilot to deployment requires an **accountable owner**, a clear baseline, measurable outcomes, a defined decision point and the ability to decommission the initiative if it does not deliver.

A P&L owner creates a particularly important shift: the initiative becomes part of the business rather than remaining an innovation exercise.

This means asking:

- Who owns this initiative?
- What business outcome is it responsible for?
- What is the baseline?
- How will value be measured?
- When will we decide whether to scale?
- What would cause us to stop?
- What is the cost of switching it off?

The presence of an accountable business owner changes AI from an innovation project into an organisational commitment.

3.6 Efficiency Is Not the Same as Disruption

AI can reduce the cost of serving existing customers. That is valuable.

But it is not necessarily transformational.

The more strategic question is whether AI can change **who the organisation serves, what it offers, how it delivers value or how it competes**.

The discussion drew a clear distinction between organisations using AI primarily to lower their cost to serve and those using it to change the markets, customers or business models they can reach.

This reframes the board's role in evaluating AI investment.

Dr. Irene Esther Mutuzo challenged boards to ask: **“What becomes possible because of AI that was not possible before?”**

Instead of asking only: *“How much will AI save us?”*

That is where AI moves from automation into strategy.

3.7 The Human Factor: AI Must Not Outpace Human Capability

Perhaps one of the most human discussions of the dialogue centred on what happens to people as organisations adopt AI.

Technology adoption is not simply an implementation exercise. It changes how people work, how they experience their roles and how they make decisions.

Dr. Irene Esther Mutuzo highlighted the very different experiences of **digital migrants and digital natives**.

For digital migrants, AI adoption may bring concerns about job security, confidence and the ability to acquire new skills quickly. For digital natives, the challenge can be different: familiarity with technology may create a tendency towards over-reliance on it.

Neither group should be treated as a problem to be solved.

Both bring capabilities the organisation needs.

Digital migrants may bring institutional knowledge, experience and an instinct to question issues of privacy, ethics and creativity. Digital natives may bring confidence, speed and familiarity with emerging technologies.

The opportunity is to create mutual learning rather than generational separation.

The discussion highlighted reverse mentorship as one practical approach: experienced employees can help younger colleagues maintain judgement and awareness of privacy, ethics and creativity, while younger employees can help colleagues who are less comfortable with technology build confidence in adopting AI.

The broader lesson for boards is that AI adoption requires the same seriousness of change management applied to other major organisational transformations.

Boards should therefore ask: **How are we preparing our people for the AI-enabled organisation?**

That means considering:

- reskilling and upskilling;
- communication and change management;
- psychological readiness;
- mentorship and reverse mentorship;
- role redesign where appropriate; and
- how human capability can be strengthened alongside technology.

Before treating AI purely as a route to workforce reduction, organisations should also ask how existing talent can be reinvented and redeployed into work where human capability and AI complement one another.

3.8 Protecting Human Judgement in an AI-Enabled World

The workforce discussion leads to a deeper question: **What happens to human judgement when machines become increasingly capable?**

The panel raised concerns about excessive dependence on AI and what that could mean for creativity, critical thinking and the distinctive capabilities that organisations derive from their people.

This is not an argument against AI adoption. It is an argument for balance!

If organisations across an industry begin using the same AI tools, many of them may eventually become equally proficient at prompting and automation. What remains difficult to replicate is the **institutional knowledge, judgement, creativity, relationships and experience** that people bring.

That human capability may become even more important as AI becomes more widespread.

Source: *“BBC News, reporting on Ford rehiring human engineers after AI fails to match quality checks.”*

[Source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cgrkd41n2v9o>]

The governance question therefore shifts from: **“How much can we automate?”**

to: **“What human capabilities must we deliberately preserve and develop?”**

The panel emphasised the importance of psychological readiness, critical thinking, communication and continuous learning. Human oversight should not simply mean having a person somewhere in the process. It should mean having people who are capable of questioning AI outputs, recognising when context has been missed, exercising judgement and knowing when technology should not be relied upon.

This is particularly important because the scale and speed of AI can amplify both good and bad decisions.

A poor individual decision may affect one outcome. A poor decision embedded in an automated system can potentially be reproduced across thousands of decisions before anyone notices.

The goal, therefore, is not simply **human-in-the-loop**.

It is: **Human capability in the loop.**

3.9 Africa and Emerging Markets: Leapfrogging With Governance

The African context brought a distinct but highly relevant dimension to the global conversation.

African organisations face real constraints, including infrastructure, access to specialised talent, data quality, local language representation, vendor dependency and evolving regulatory environments.

But these constraints do not mean Africa must wait. The continent has already demonstrated its ability to leapfrog traditional models in areas such as financial services, distribution and digital delivery.

The critical distinction is that **not everything can be leapfrogged. Technology can be leapfrogged. Governance cannot.**

Foundational capabilities such as data lineage, identity, accountability, security and reliable infrastructure remain essential.

The discussion also highlighted the importance of developing approaches that reflect local realities rather than simply importing models developed elsewhere.

At the same time, African organisations can benefit from global collaboration and knowledge-sharing as countries and institutions develop their own approaches to AI governance.

The discussion highlighted the progress being made across a number of African countries and the importance of collaboration across jurisdictions rather than attempting to develop every solution independently.

Source: *iAfrica AI Insider*.

[Source: <https://iafrica.substack.com/p/iafricas-ai-insider-8cc>]

For boards, this creates a dual responsibility: **Adopt what works globally. Build what works locally.**

Where regulation is still evolving, organisations should not treat uncertainty as a reason for organisational paralysis. Boards can establish internal standards, clear use-case boundaries and accountability structures while engaging with regulators and other stakeholders as the broader governance environment develops.

3.10 AI Governance Is a Multi-Disciplinary Responsibility

One of the broader insights from the dialogue was that the future of AI governance will not be shaped by technologists alone. AI sits at the intersection of technology and human behaviour.

Its consequences are therefore technological, economic, organisational, social and behavioural at the same time. This requires boards and management teams to bring together different perspectives: technology, risk, finance, law, ethics, strategy, operations, psychology and stakeholder engagement.

The discussion reinforced the value of diversity not simply as a board-composition principle, but as a practical governance capability.

Different lenses reveal different risks. A technology specialist may understand how a system works. A risk professional may see its exposure. A legal professional may identify liability. An operational leader may understand implementation constraints. A psychologist may identify how the technology will affect behaviour and adoption.

Effective AI governance requires these perspectives to connect.

AI systems operate in human systems.

The governance response must therefore be equally human, organisational and technological.

4. The Boardroom Checklist

The dialogue ultimately brought the discussion back to a practical question:

4.1 What should directors ask management now?

Based on the themes raised by the panel, boards should consider the following questions:

- I. The Blind-Spot Question**
What does our AI dashboard tell us, and what is it not measuring?
- II. The Accountability Question**
If this system fails, causes harm or produces an unacceptable outcome, who is accountable and how quickly can we recover?
- III. The Value Question**
What specific business problem are we solving, and are we creating efficiency or genuine strategic advantage?
- IV. The Deployment Question**
Who is the accountable executive owner, what are the measurable outcomes, and when do we decide to scale, change or switch off?
- V. The Risk Question**
How is AI changing our organisation's risk profile, including cybersecurity, privacy, data, concentration and third-party risks?
- VI. The Vendor Question**
Where is our data going, who has access to it, how is the vendor governed, and what happens if that provider fails?
- VII. The People Question**
How will AI change our workforce, and what are we doing to reskill, support and prepare our people?
- VIII. The Governance Question**
Who is responsible for ensuring that our AI governance framework is actually implemented across the organisation?
- IX. The Context Question**
Are we adopting AI because it genuinely fits our organisation's context, or because we feel pressure to keep up?
- X. The Future Question**
Are we governing only today's AI systems, or are we building resilience for the technologies that come next?

4.2 What This Means for Boards

The dialogue points to a broader evolution in the role of the board.

Boards need to move:

- ✓ From approval → to informed challenge
- ✓ From technology oversight → to enterprise-wide technology governance
- ✓ From risk avoidance → to responsible value creation
- ✓ From pilots → to accountable deployment
- ✓ From policies on paper → to governance in practice
- ✓ From technical expertise → to multidisciplinary AI literacy
- ✓ From short-term efficiency → to long-term strategic resilience
- ✓ From governing the technology → to governing the conditions around the technology

This is ultimately a question of leadership.

5. Conclusion

5.1 The Board Must Lead the Conversation

AI is developing faster than many governance structures were designed to accommodate.

That does not mean boards should respond with fear. Nor should they respond with enthusiasm without sufficient scrutiny. They need to respond with **curiosity, discipline and leadership**.

The strongest message from the dialogue was that boards do not need to know everything about AI. They need to know enough to **ask the questions that matter**.

They need to understand the value being pursued, the risks being accepted, the people being affected and the accountability that sits behind every major decision.

They must also recognise that responsible AI governance is not a one-time exercise. As technologies evolve, so must the capability of boards, management and organisations to understand and govern them.

The closing reflections from the dialogue brought these themes together: AI is a transformation taking place across the world, requiring contributions from different disciplines, sectors and geographies. People must remain at the centre of technology, learning must remain continuous, and boards must take an active role rather than treating AI as an issue belonging only to the technology function.

The boards that lead in this era will not necessarily be those that adopt AI first.

They will be those that **learn continuously, challenge assumptions, ask one more question before signing off, and create the conditions in which innovation can deliver value without losing accountability**.

For boards everywhere, the challenge is no longer simply to understand artificial intelligence.

It is to **govern intelligently in an age of intelligence**.

6. About the Dialogue

The *AI at the Board Level: From Oversight Literacy to Strategic Deployment* Global Board Dialogue was convened by the **League of East African Directors (LEAD)** as a platform for directors, board chairs, executives and governance leaders to engage with the strategic and governance implications of emerging technologies.

The dialogue brought together perspectives from Africa, Europe and the Middle East, reflecting the increasingly global nature of the AI governance conversation.



7. About the Panel

MS. JOSEPHINE OLOK - MODERATOR



- **Josephine Olok** is a Board Chair, Non-Executive Director, and Digital Transformation Champion based in Kampala, Uganda, and the Co-founder and Director of LumJo Consultants Ltd. She specializes in IT business strategy, digital transformation, and enterprise risk governance, advising organizations across the FinTech, banking, oil & gas, and public sectors.
- With over 25 years of executive experience and 15 years at the board level, she has successfully delivered major technology and transformation initiatives for prominent organizations including Tullow Oil, Barclays Bank, Bank of Uganda, and the United Nations World Food Program. She actively serves in senior governance capacities as a Board Chair, Committee Chair, and Audit and Risk Committee Member across both public and private sectors.
- A distinguished leader in her field, Josephine holds the distinction of being the first Qualified Risk Director® in Uganda and is a Chartered Director. She is also a dedicated advocate for women in STEM and education, serving as Chair of FITSPA Uganda, a mentor for Project Girls for Girls, and a member of the UK Commonwealth Alumni Advisory Panel, where she helps shape strategies to support Commonwealth Scholars.

DR. ANDREA BONIME- BLANC - PANELLIST



- **Andrea Bonime-Blanc**, JD/PhD, is founder & CEO of GEC Risk Advisory, a board member, strategic advisor, and author. She specializes in the governance of change focusing on global megatrends, leadership trust, geopolitical change, ESG/ESGT and sustainability, and exponential technology, advising business, NGOs, and government.
- A former c-suite executive at four global companies (including Bertelsmann and PSEG Global), she serves on several boards and advisory boards (including Keralty's International AI Advisory Board and Biomimetics International).
- Andrea is the Independent Ethics Advisor to the Financial Oversight and Management Board for Puerto Rico and founding global faculty at the Institute for Corporate Directors Malaysia Mandatory Board Sustainability Certificate.
- She is a Life Member of the Council on Foreign Relations and has authored 6 books including most recently [Governing Pandora: Leading in the Age of Generative AI and Exponential Technology](#) (Georgetown University Press 2026). She was born and raised in Germany and Spain, received a joint JD in Law and PhD in Political Science from Columbia University, and lives in New York City.

MR. JULIUS TORACH - PANELLIST



- Mr. Julius Torach is the Managing Director of Vision Africa AI Limited. He is a senior digital transformation and AI expert with over 30 years of experience leading digital transformation across government, regulatory bodies and development programmes in Uganda and the wider African region.
- He was the Commissioner for Information Technology (at Ministry of ICT and the Office of DPP) and a Director of eGovernment Services in NITA-Uganda; combined with an active consulting, advisory and teaching practice.
- He coordinated the development of the National Strategy on the Fourth Industrial Revolution and is a Member of Afri-Asia AI Policy Network. He has a rare combination of national and regional policy leadership (including Data Protection and Privacy Regulations).
- Mr. Torach holds a MSc in Data Science (East London, UK), a MBA in Strategic Planning (Heriot-Watt, UK), a MSc in Computer Science (Makerere), a Grad. Diploma in ICT Leadership (Dublin), a Diploma in Law (LDC), etc. He is internationally certified in Generative AI, Microsoft Azure and ITIL among others.

DR. NICOLAS SABBen - PANELLIST



- Dr Nicolas Sabben is President of Apex École de Management, a business school based in Lyon, France. He is a senior executive, researcher and reserve officer with near to 20 years of experience in strategy & consulting in technology management, organizational transformation and cybersecurity.
- Holding a PhD in Management Sciences, he is an affiliated researcher at the MIT Sloan School of Management and an associate researcher at the French Gendarmerie Research Center (CRGN). His work focuses on leadership, organizational agility, data-driven strategy and the management of complex strategic and technological transformations.
- As President of Apex, he leads the school's academic and international development with a strong focus on executive education, applied learning and preparing professionals to become effective business leaders in rapidly changing environments.

MR. MUTISUNGE ZULU - PANELLIST



- Mutisunge Zulu is the Chief Risk Officer at ZANACO, one of Zambia's leading financial institutions, where he provides executive leadership across enterprise risk management, governance, cyber resilience, capital management, and strategic risk. With extensive experience spanning banking, sovereign debt, financial markets, energy, infrastructure, and mining, he has established himself as a respected voice on the intersection of risk, strategy, and economic transformation in frontier markets.
- Mutisunge is a Global Executive PhD candidate at ESCP Business School (Paris), where his research explores how executive teams make strategic decisions during periods of sovereign debt distress, bridging insights from finance and strategic management. He is also a graduate of the Harvard Advanced Management Program and holds a Global Executive MBA from Alliance Manchester Business School.
- A frequent speaker at executive forums and industry conferences, Mutisunge contributes thought leadership on sovereign risk, financial stability, corporate governance, cybersecurity, and leadership. He is passionate about strengthening resilient institutions and advancing strategic decision-making across Africa's financial sector.

DR. SHAHID A. WANI - PANELLIST



- Dr. Shahid A. Wani is Associate Dean at Eaton Business School in Sharjah, UAE, where he leads academic governance and accreditation strategy, with experience spanning all three layers of accreditation, government/regulatory, institutional, and programmatic.
- He holds a Doctor of Business Administration with specific focus on the application of AI and machine learning in strategic decision-making across educational institutions. Dr. Wani has led the design of AI-integrated curricula, and advises on responsible AI governance as institutions move from experimentation to structured oversight.
- He sits on the Advisory Board of Cambridge International Qualifications and consults on and shapes strategy for AI governance and institutional accreditation for education providers. His current focus is the strategic importance of AI across higher education institutions globally.

DR. IRENE ESTHER MUTUZO SEVUME - PANELLIST



- Dr. Irene Esther Mutuzo Sevume is a digital psychologist, Lecturer at Makerere University, and researcher at the intersection of technology and human behaviour. Her work explores how technology shapes human behaviour and also examines the psychosocial and cultural factors influencing technology adoption in the African context.
- Grounded in her belief that human behaviour is central to meaningful and sustainable digital transformation, she advocates for technology and digital solutions that are both innovative and human-centred. A passionate champion of responsible and ethical Artificial Intelligence (AI) adoption, Irene has participated in multiple AI capacity-building initiatives and contributed to research on the ethical use of AI, including efforts focused on debiasing large language models for the African context.
- Through her teaching and research, she promotes human-centred approaches to technology design and implementation, ensuring that digital systems are not only functional but also inclusive, contextually relevant, and responsive to user needs and societal impact. Her professional experience spans organisations such as New Vision, Diwala, BrighterMonday, Greenhill Schools, GS Virtual Learning, the IEEE Standards Association, and the Worldwide Universities Network, among others.
- Beyond academia and technology, Irene is a renowned and award-winning spoken word poet currently serving as Board Chair of the Lantern Meet Foundation, where she is dedicated to mentoring and nurturing talent in the literary arts.

8. A Final Reflection

The future of AI governance will not be determined by technology alone. It will be determined by the quality of the decisions, institutions and people surrounding that technology.

The boards that lead in this era will not necessarily be those that adopt AI first. They will be those that learn continuously, ask better questions, challenge assumptions, govern with courage and ensure that innovation remains accountable to the people and organisations it is intended to serve.

The question is no longer whether AI belongs in the boardroom. **It does.** The question is whether boards are prepared to lead the conversation.

Report compiled by:

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