



## **CONCEPT NOTE**

### **Panel Discussion**

#### **“60 Years of US-Kenya Partnership in Digital Transformation”**

**Date: Thursday March 27<sup>th</sup> 2025**

**Time: 9:30 am – 12:30 pm**

**Location: Kenya School of Government**

### **Background**

The U.S.–Kenya partnership on digitization and technology has evolved from early collaborative initiatives into a robust alliance that leverages American technological expertise and Kenyan innovation to drive economic transformation. This partnership was built on a foundation of shared interests in digital technology advancements and a mutual recognition of the power of digital transformation in fostering socio-economic growth. Central to this evolution has been a series of targeted initiatives aimed at positioning Kenya as a leader in Africa’s digital economy.

Historically, joint projects have included capacity-building programs, technology transfer initiatives, and collaborative research efforts supported by American government agencies, alongside direct investments from U.S. technology companies. A core aim of the partnership is to harness this digital expertise to reinforce Kenya’s emergence as a leading digital economic hub in Africa. By combining American technological know-how with Kenya’s vibrant startup ecosystem and innovative digital practices, the partnership is actively positioning Kenya as a formidable competitor to established technology hubs in Nigeria and South Africa.

The collaboration extends into several critical areas including cybersecurity, digital financial services, and e-governance. Through coordinated efforts, both nations are developing policy frameworks and infrastructure that ensure secure, scalable, and sustainable digital environments. This targeted approach facilitates a vibrant exchange of ideas and best practices, driving policies that support innovation while safeguarding digital ecosystems from emerging threats. Looking ahead, the U.S.–Kenya digital partnership is committed to deepening this integration by promoting research, cross-border investments, and technology-driven development programs. The ultimate goal is not only to expand Kenya’s digital economy and solidify its position as a leading tech hub in Africa but also to provide U.S. businesses and corporations with a viable platform to expand their markets and foster collaborative innovations across the continent. This seminar serves as a platform to articulate these ambitions, share historical lessons, and map out the future trajectory of this transformative partnership.

### **Seminar Objective**

This seminar, organized by the **University of Nairobi’s Africa Center for the Study of the U.S. (ACSUS)** in partnership with the **Regional Centre of Competence for Digital and AI Skilling** at the **Kenya School of Government**, aims to reflect on the evolution of the U.S. - Kenya Partnership in Digital Transformation over the past 60 years.



### Panelists

- **Representative**, State Department for ICT and Digital Economy, Ministry of Information, Communications & The Digital Economy
- **Amb (Prof) Bitange Ndemo, PhD, CBS**, Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya to Belgium and the European Union Embassy of Kenya, Brussels
- **Ms. Winnie Karanu**, AI National Skills Director, Microsoft Kenya
- **Prof. X.N. Iraki**, Economic Analyst, University of Nairobi, Faculty of Business and Management Sciences
- **Ms. Magdalene Chepkemoi**, Founder & CEO, EldoHub

### Moderator

- **Brian George Otieno**, News anchor and business reporter, Nation Media Group

### Seminar Format

- Panel Discussion: The seminar will feature a panel discussion with five (5) panelists representing key sectors, including government, the business community, academia, and civil society.
- Opening Remarks: Each guest speaker will have 5-10 minutes for their opening remarks.
- Moderated Session: Following each speaker, the moderator will guide a 30-minute discussion based on the seminar objectives.
- Q&A Session: A 20-minute question-and-answer session will be facilitated to encourage audience engagement and interaction.
- Duration: The entire event will last for 3 hours.

### About the Program: “Reflecting on 60 Years of U.S.-Kenya Diplomatic Engagement”

The Africa Center for the Study of the U.S. (ACSUS) was established by the Department of Diplomacy and International Studies (DDIS) at the University of Nairobi on November 11, 2022, with a mission to foster intellectual and cultural exchanges that deepen understanding of U.S.-Africa relations. ACSUS is committed to amplifying African-generated knowledge, empowering scholars, researchers, and students to critically engage with U.S. society, history, and policies. This panel discussion is part of an ACSUS program sponsored by the U.S. Embassy Public Diplomacy Section (PDS), and is part of the commemoration of 60 years of U.S.-Kenya partnership. It aims to enhance awareness and understanding of U.S.-Kenya bilateral relations, while exploring future opportunities for collaboration in key areas such as trade, investment, security, governance, and health.