

What the 2025 competition says about employers' commitment to excellence

The competition attracted remarkable participation across all categories

Friday, November 7, 2025, was a night of glamour, prestige, and celebration as the Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE) unveiled this year's best employers. The evening's theme was apt: "Honouring Best Employers".

The FKE Employer of the Year Awards (EYA) event is more than just a competition. It is a movement for transformation that celebrates excellence, the ultimate goal being to drive positive change in the world of work.

EYA is aimed at recognising organisations that have implemented forward-thinking policies, systems, and processes that promote enterprise competitiveness, productivity, and industrial harmony.

This Fifth Edition stands as a testament to the resilience,



Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE) Executive Director and CEO Jacqueline Mugo makes her remarks during the Employer of the Year Awards ceremony held in Nairobi on November 7. FRANCIS NDERITU

innovation, and leadership of Kenyan employers who continue to steer their organisations toward sustainable growth amid evolving challenges.

The competition attracted remarkable participation across all categories, reflecting the growing commitment of employers to

excellence and innovation. A total of 85 organisations submitted entries, with 51 completing the comprehensive evaluation process.

The assessment spanned eight key dimensions of organisational excellence, including Corporate Performance (37 participants), Leadership and Governance (38),

Innovation and Productivity (34), Responsible Business Conduct (31), Inclusivity and Diversity (52), Workplace Environment (41), Learning and Development (39), and Effective Human Resource Practice (41) – showcasing the diverse and dynamic nature of Kenya's employer community.

This year's competition also featured a dedicated SME Category and Special Recognition Categories for both Large Corporates and SMEs, providing an inclusive platform that celebrated excellence across organisations of all sizes and sectors.

FKE recognises that employers play a pivotal role in national development by providing livelihoods, fostering productivity, and creating opportunities for millions of Kenyans.

Through the awards, FKE seeks to encourage best practices by inspiring employers to adopt global standards that promote sustainable businesses and lasting social impact. The event also serves as a call to policymakers to create a conducive business environment

that enables enterprises to grow and generate more jobs. Ultimately, EYA aims to enhance productivity, competitiveness, and people-driven leadership, reinforcing decent and meaningful employment as the foundation of enterprise success.

Launched in 2017, the awards successfully ran for three consecutive years before being paused due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The event made a strong comeback in 2023, reaffirming FKE's commitment to celebrating the role of employers in shaping Kenya's future world of work.

To ensure transparency and credibility, FKE engaged Nielsen IQ, a globally recognised research firm, to independently conduct the evaluation and assessment process across the various award categories.

Through EYA, FKE seeks to identify, rank, and publicly honour employers that demonstrate excellence in the various perspectives highlighted, thereby inspiring others to emulate best practices that contribute to Kenya's social and economic growth.

In the eyes of FKE: Here are the best employers this year

The Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE) Employer of the Year Awards (EYA) 2025 edition showcased Kenya's best-in-class establishments. Some organisations won in more than one category.

CPF Financial Services emerged as the Overall Winner, recognised for its outstanding leadership, people-centred culture, and sustainable business practices.

Coca Cola Beverages Africa-Kenya was named first runner-up, and Kabarak University the second runner-up.

Kabarak University also won in the Leadership and Governance category ahead of Absa Kenya and Kenya Electricity Generating Company (KenGen), in that order.

Kenpoly Manufacturers Limited took the Corporate Performance award, with World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF) and Liberty Life Heritage Insurance taking first and second runner-up, respectively.

The Innovation and Productivity award went to Sama Source EPZ Kenya Limited. Jubilee Holdings Limited emerged first runner-up, and Mombasa Port Deposit-Taking (DT) Sacco followed.

Coca Cola Beverages Africa-Kenya was the overall winner of the Responsible Business Conduct category. Old Mutual Life Assurance Company Ltd and The Williamson Holden World Wildlife Foundation took first and second runner-up positions.

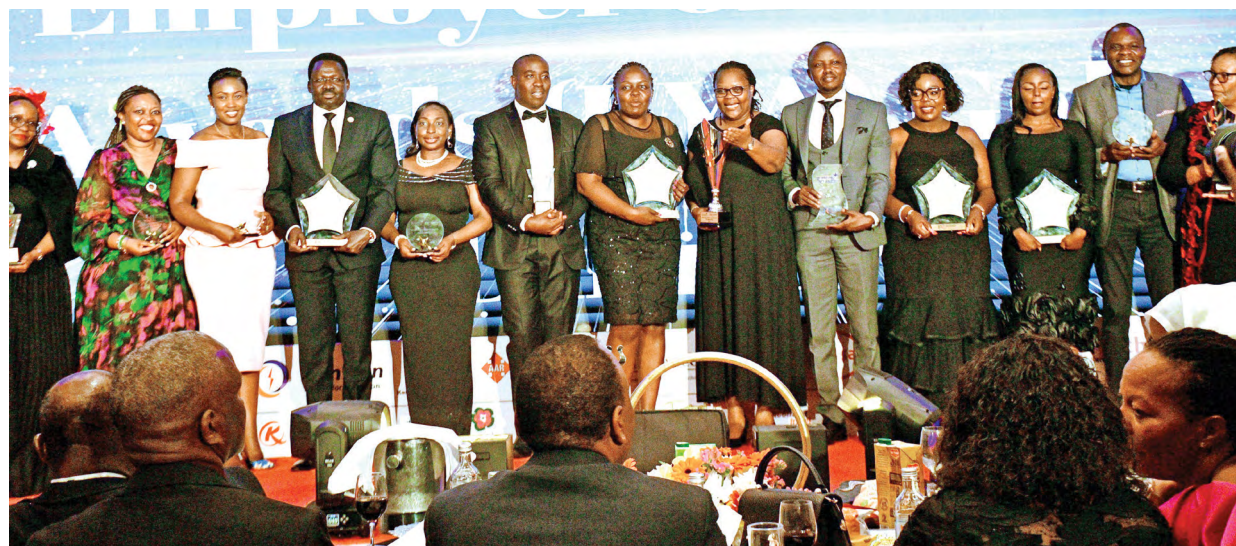
The Inclusivity and Diversity award went to CPF Financial Services Limited. VSO Kenya was declared first runner-up and Bomu Hospital, second runner-up.

Cigna International Health Services emerged the overall winner in the Workplace Environment category, beating Airflo Limited and AAR Insurance to it, in that order.

Kenya Reinsurance Corporation (Kenya Re) won the Learning and Development trophy ahead of Strathmore University and Haco Industries Kenya Limited.

In the HR Practices and Industrial Relations category, English Press Limited emerged top. It was followed by Kenya Seed Company Ltd and Tropical Heat Limited, respectively.

Fracht Kenya Limited took the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) award. It was followed by VSO Kenya and DHL Global Forwarding (K) Limited.



Winners in the Employer of the Year Awards ceremony take a group photo at Radisson Blu Hotel, where the ceremony was held, on November 7. FRANCIS NDERITU

Laser Insurance Brokers scooped the special award on First-Time Multi-Category SME.

"We thank all the sponsors and partners for the great support given to help us deliver a highly successful and memorable Employer of the Year Awards, 2025," FKE states, encouraging employers who participated in the survey to acquire a customised report to help address the gaps that may be existing in their organisation.



CPF Financial Services was the overall winner in the 2025 Employer of the Year Awards. Here, Group Head of Human Resources Lucy Mandago (left) is joined by Coca Cola Beverages Africa-Kenya (CBA-K) Country Lead-Talent Development Gertrude Obinchi (right), and Kabarak University Vice-Chancellor Prof Henry K. Kiplangat, representing 1st Runner-Up and 1st Runner-Up respectively. FRANCIS NDERITU



Honouring Best Employers



Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE) *Congratulates*
all the winners of the Employer of the Year Awards (EYA) 2025

Overall Winner: CPF Financial Services Limited
1st Runner Up: Coca Cola Beverages Africa- Kenya
2nd Runner Up: Kabarak University



The CPF Financial Services team celebrates their victory as the Overall Winner of the Employers of the Year Awards (EYA) 2025 at Radisson Blu Upper Hill, Nairobi



The Coca-Cola Beverages Africa – Kenya team proudly receives the 1st Runner-Up award.



The Kabarak University team is recognized as the 2nd Runner-Up at the EYA 2025

S/n	AWARD	WINNERS
1	Leadership & Governance	
	OVERALL WINNER 1st Runner UP 2nd Runner UP	KABARAK UNIVERSITY ABSA KENYA KENYA ELECTRICITY GENERATING COMPANY (KENGEN)
2	Corporate Performance	
	OVERALL WINNER 1st Runner UP 2nd Runner UP	KENPOLY MANUFACTURERS LIMITED WORLD WILDLIFE FUND FOR NATURE (WWF) LIBERTY LIFE HERITAGE INSURANCE
3	Innovation & Productivity	
	OVERALL WINNER 1st Runner UP 2nd Runner UP	SAMA SOURCE KENYA LIMITED JUBILEE HOLDINGS LIMITED MOMBASA PORT DT SACCO
4	Responsible Business Conduct	
	OVERALL WINNER 1st Runner UP 2nd Runner UP	COCA COLA BEVERAGES AFRICA- KENYA OLD MUTUAL LIFE ASURANCE COMPANY LTD THE WILLIAMSON HOLDEN WORLD WILDLIFE FOUNDATION
5	Inclusivity & Diversity	
	OVERALL WINNER 1st Runner UP 2nd Runner UP	CPF FINANCIAL SERVICES LIMITED VSO KENYA BOMU HOSPITAL
6	Workplace Environment	
	OVERALL WINNER 1st Runner UP 2nd Runner UP	CIGNA INTERNATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES AIRFLO LIMITED AAR INSURANCE
7	Learning & Development	
	OVERALL WINNER 1st Runner UP 2nd Runner UP	KENYA REINSURANCE CORPORATION (KENYA RE) STRATHMORE UNIVERSITY HACO INDUSTRIES KENYA LIMITED
8	HR Practices & Industrial Relations	
	OVERALL WINNER 1st Runner UP 2nd Runner UP	ENGLISH PRESS LIMITED KENYA SEED COMPANY LTD TROPICAL HEAT LIMITED
9	Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)	
	OVERALL WINNER 1st Runner UP 2nd Runner UP	FRACHT KENYA LIMITED VSO KENYA DHL GLOBAL FORWARDING (K) LIMITED
10	Special Awards: First-Time Multi-Category LARGE CORPORATE	NATIONAL SOCIAL SECURITY FUND (NSSF)
11	Special Awards: First-Time Multi-Category SME	LASER INSURANCE BROKERS

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For over 65 years, the **Federation of Kenya Employers** as the premier employers' body, has represented and advanced members' interests in social, economic, employment and labour relations. Through policy advocacy, **FKE** promotes an enabling business environment to enhance enterprise competitive ness and productivity.

FKE membership is open to registered public and private entities of all sizes including corporates, business associations, parastatals, county governments, cooperatives, partnerships, faith based organizations, learning institutions, and non-governmental organizations.

BENEFITS OF BEING AN FKE MEMBER

- Expert advice and representation** in employment and labour relations matters (Collective Bargaining Agreements, dispute resolution, consultations on all work-related issues, opinions & advisories on emerging issues and employee separation)
- Access to **Research information on economic indicators and labour issues** that facilitate business practice
- Access to relevant **learning and skills development** programs.
- Organizational Development Services** (recruitment & selection, job evaluation, HR audits, strategic plans, development and review of HR manuals & policies) to enhance performance, productivity and efficiency.
- Representation** on key national, regional, and global bodies and forums to advance the employers' agenda.
- Benchmarking** and networking opportunities at national, regional and global level.
- Access to FKE's Online services through the **eWaaajiri Members Service Portal**

JOIN THE TRUSTED VOICE OF EMPLOYERS

FKE encourages Employers who participated in the survey to acquire a customized report to help address the gaps that may be existing their in organization.

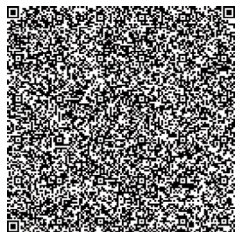
Those who wish to get these reports can contact our officer: **Ms. Judy Kudwoli**

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The win validates the raft of changes the firm has implemented over the last two-and-a-half years

By Evans Ongwae

Kenpoly Manufacturers Ltd, an innovative plastics products manufacturer, won the Corporate Performance trophy during this year's Employer of the Year Awards (EYA). This was the company's first ever participation in the competition organised by the Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE). This year's event featured 51 finalists.

Mr Stephan Grabowski, the firm's Chief Executive Officer (CEO), says the joyful moment is a source of pride and inspiration for Kenpoly employees to aim even higher in the coming years.

He says at Kenpoly, they want to raise the standards, not just for the firm, but for the industry they operate in. The quest goes beyond becoming more competitive. "We want to challenge ourselves to see if we can develop the industry further and make it more sustainable," the CEO explains.

Mr Grabowski asserts that the win validates the raft of changes the firm has implemented over the last two-and-a-half years, and the standards it keeps. "But we don't want to be complacent and consider that we have arrived," he asserts.

The CEO lauds the business owners for the decision to step back and let a new management team led by him take charge of the firm's operations since January 2023. The positive impact of the organisational change engineered

How we bagged the Corporate Performance Award at first attempt: Kenpoly CEO



Performance has improved by tens of percentage points, and customer value has increased, with more people buying our products.

MR STEPHAN GRABOWSKI, CEO, KENPOLY MANUFACTURERS LTD

by the new team is evident, with the award among the fruits of the bold move.

Consider, for example, that in less than three years, Kenpoly has



implemented five ISO standards, an arduous task. These standards are: ISO 9001:2015 (Quality Management Systems); ISO 45001:2018 (Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems); ISO 14001:2015 (Environmental Management Systems); ISO 22000:2018 (Food Safety Management Systems); and ISO 26000:2018 (Social Responsibility).

Mr Grabowski says this success is thanks to the great people that Kenpoly has, the structures it has put in place to support them, and the tools it has provided for them to excel at what they do.

"The shareholders and management looked at the organisation and decided where it should go," narrates the CEO, explaining that the first step was to attract the right people – high performers. "We needed great people to build a strong team that would take

Kenpoly where we wanted it to go."

Kenpoly, he adds, won the Corporate Performance award because its employees know their goals and responsibilities, and do their best to contribute to the company's success. He explains that everyone is clear about their goal, target and mandate for which they are accountable.

"Performance," says the CEO, "has improved by tens of percentage points, and customer value has increased, with more people buying our products."

To demonstrate how seriously employees at Kenpoly take their responsibilities, Mr Grabowski cites the case of the Maintenance and Engineering team. Of their own volition, these employees sought to find ways to improve energy efficiency, and succeeded in doing so, impressing management with their endeavour.

The FKE award win shows that

the Kenpoly team feels a sense of responsibility to their customers, the CEO underscores, and reveals that they hope to perform even better next year.

"It is possible for anyone or any organisation to grow," says Mr Grabowski. "All you need is to be clear about the direction you want to take. Keep trying, and keep growing. We are proof of that."

The Kenpoly CEO says he has seen young employees who want to grow and they share valuable ideas on how to improve the company. Some of them are quite young, but are welcome to participate in management meetings and make their contributions.

Kenpoly has, for nearly 50 years, been a market leader in the manufacture of quality products. These products have made their way to 13 countries in the continent.

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At Kenpoly, people-centred policies encourage innovation and productivity

By Evans Ongwae

Clear human resource policies, among other support systems, enable employees at Kenpoly Manufacturers Ltd to succeed in their jobs. As the company's Head of HR, Ms Margaret Geno, explains, the policies ensure everyone knows what is expected of them.

"Here, we have a mantra summarised as 100/0 – meaning 100 percent accountability and zero excuses," says Ms Geno.

Some of the policies that contributed to Kenpoly winning at the FKE Employer of the Year Awards are the following, amongst others:

- Recruitment and Onboarding Policy
- Performance Management Policy
- Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Reward and Recognition Policy
- Innovation and Productivity



Ms Margaret Geno

- Governance Policy
- Business Ethics Policy.

These policies encourage innovation and productivity across the organisation, especially because employees know they will be recognised and rewarded for their effort. "For example, our outstanding

sales person this year will be rewarded with a trip to Zanzibar with the family," Ms Geno reveals.

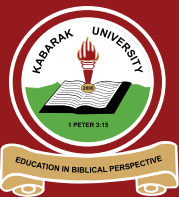
The Kenpoly Head of HR says the culture transformation programme instituted by management over the last few years was also a game changer.

Having employees who embrace the company's values and norms has helped. "People are at the heart of the business," Ms Geno says. "We ensure they feel valued and enjoy a sense of belonging."

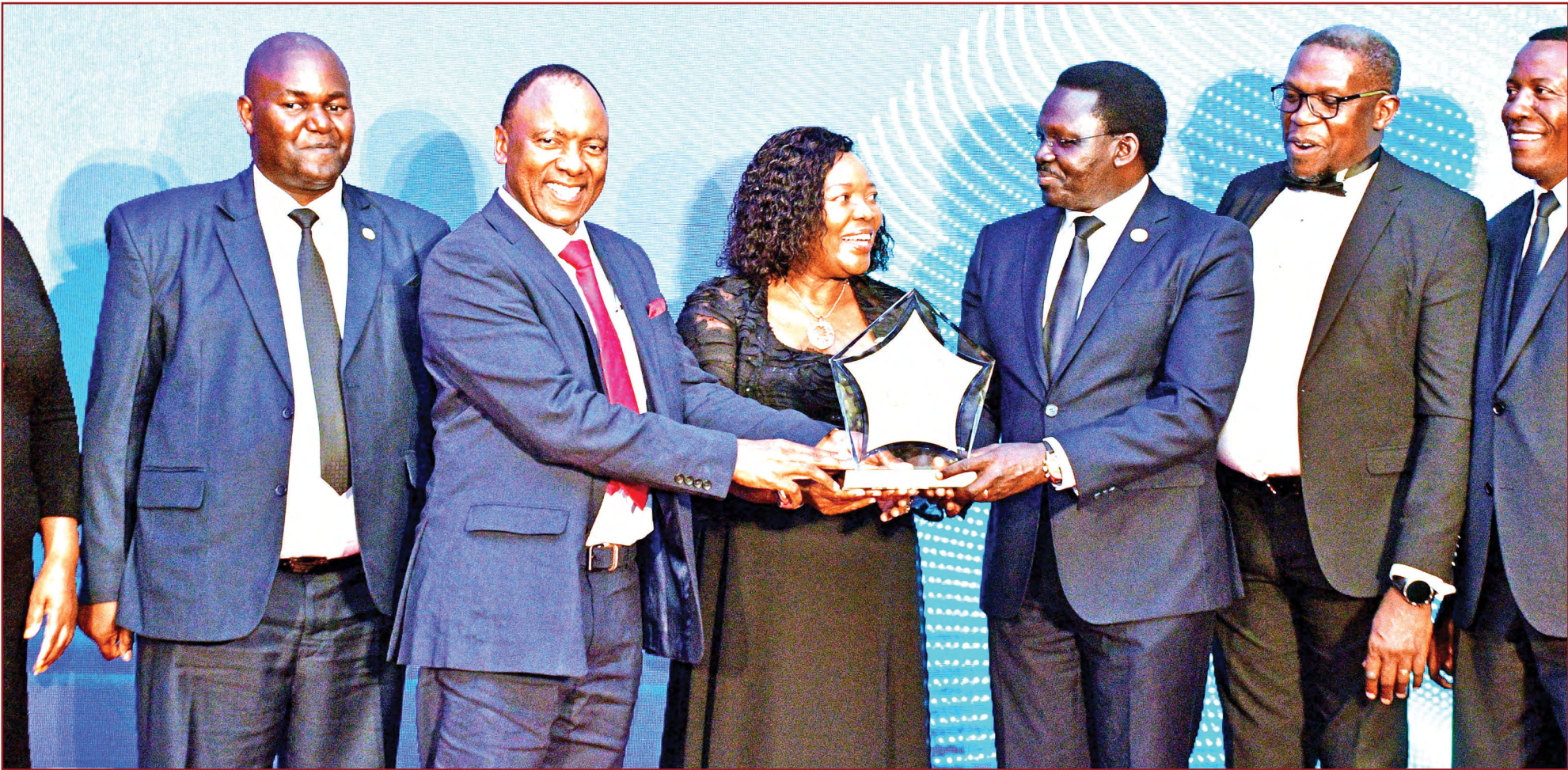
This, she adds, makes them accountable. "We hold honest conversations with them, right from recruitment," Ms Geno says, emphasising that it is not the employer alone who assesses potential employees. The candidates, too, want to feel that they are about to join a great employer who will take care of their welfare.

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Kabarak University Shines at FKE Employer of the Year Awards



Kabarak University has once again demonstrated its excellence by winning two prestigious awards at the 2025 Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE) Employer of the Year Awards. The university emerged as the Overall Winner in the Leadership and Governance Category and was also recognized as the Second Runners-up in the Overall Awards Category, reaffirming its commitment to excellence, ethical leadership, and sound institutional governance.

These remarkable achievements highlight Kabarak University’s dedication to nurturing a culture of accountability, transparency, and people-centered leadership. Under the visionary guidance of its management, the university continues to set high standards in organizational governance, employee welfare, and sustainable institutional practices.

The recognition by FKE underscores Kabarak University’s strategic focus on empowering staff, promoting innovation, and fostering a conducive environment for academic and professional growth. It also reflects the university’s adherence to its Christian values, which form the foundation of its leadership and operational philosophy.

Kabarak University extends heartfelt appreciation to its staff, students, and stakeholders whose hard work and commitment made these accomplishments possible. The awards serve as an inspiration for the entire Kabarak community to continue striving for excellence and integrity in every endeavor.

#KabarakExcellence #LeadershipAndGovernance #FKEAwards2025

Kenya Reinsurance Corporation named Employer of the Year in Learning and Development

Kenya Reinsurance Corporation Limited (Kenya Re) is a leading reinsurance company established in 1970 and wholly owned by the Government of Kenya. The Corporation provides reinsurance services to more than 300 insurance companies in over 80 countries across Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.

Kenya Re is committed to delivering sustainable value through innovation, professionalism, and excellence in service delivery.

The Corporation has been named the **Employer of the Year 2025 in Learning and Development**, in recognition of its outstanding commitment to continuous employee growth, skills enhancement, and industry knowledge leadership.

The award, presented by the Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE) during the annual Employer of the Year Awards (EYA), celebrates Kenya Re's excellence in empowering its workforce through structured and innovative learning programmes that drive both employee and organisational performance.

Driving a culture of continuous learning

Kenya Re has institutionalised learning and development through a multi-layered approach that combines technical training, leadership programmes, digital learning, and cross-functional knowledge sharing. In 2023, the Corporation

launched the **Kenya Re Training Academy**, which provides structured programmes in underwriting, claims management, actuarial science, corporate governance, data analytics, ESG, IFRS 17, and emerging insurance trends.

The Academy has since trained **over 2,000 professionals**, including internal staff, interns, and industry practitioners from Kenya and across Africa. This initiative has positioned Kenya Re not only as a leading reinsurer but also as a key knowledge hub for the insurance and reinsurance sector.

Commitment to employee growth and excellence

Through its Learning and Development Framework, Kenya Re ensures that every employee has access to tailored learning pathways linked to performance objectives, career progression, and succession planning.

The Corporation integrates mentorship, coaching, and digital learning platforms to ensure continuous skills enhancement and readiness for future organisational needs.

Recognition of excellence

The **Employer of the Year Award in Learning and Development** underscores Kenya Re's leadership in creating a culture of continuous improvement and innovation. The Corporation continues to champion human capital development as a cornerstone of its corporate strategy and its contribution to the broader insurance.



Does your employer give enough attention to health and safety?

By Evans Ongwae

Some people may argue that today’s workplace is more complicated and even more stressful compared to the situation that prevailed decades ago. Others may insist that a growing understanding of what constitutes mental health is making the public realise these days that some workplaces may be more challenging than others.

Even as the country celebrates and honours the best employers of the year, the question remains: Are organisations doing everything within their powers to consistently guarantee employees a safe and healthy working environment?

An organisation’s pay may be competitive. Professional growth may be encouraged. Diversity and inclusivity may be the norm. Reward for delivering more than

what is expected may be part of the organisational culture. And as the World Health Organisation (WHO) states, “safe and healthy working environments are not only a fundamental right but are also more likely to minimise tension and conflicts at work and improve staff retention, work performance and productivity.”

The WHO goes on to warn, “...a lack of effective structures and support at work, especially for those living with mental health conditions, can affect a person’s ability to enjoy their work and do their job well. It can undermine people’s attendance at work and even stop people getting a job in the first place.”

The big question then, is: What makes a workplace safe and healthy?

One of the greatest challenges facing modern firms is how to protect the safety, health and



SHUTTERSTOCK

welfare of people engaged in work or employment. The modern workplace is home to a variety of machinery that makes work easier. But such equipment may also be replete with certain dangers, making them double-edged: Vital in driving production but risky if not handled well.

Kenyans can remember that some years back, workers who were locked overnight inside an industry in

Nairobi’s bustling industrial district ended up losing their lives when a fire broke out. Such a tragedy and other incidents of people losing fingers or limbs while on duty gave impetus for industry and authorities to stress the importance of occupational health and safety programmes. Litigation is an option for workers who suffer injuries and disability while on duty, but that is akin to bolting the stable gate after the animals have bolted.

The goal of all occupational health and safety programmes is to foster a safe work environment. As a secondary effect, it may also protect co-workers, family members, employers, customers, suppliers, nearby communities, and other members of the public who are impacted by the workplace environment. Industrial safety is an issue of concern the world over.

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