

The East African Privacy

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Kenya and East Africa Data Protection Community Mourns Rosemary Koech-Kimwatu

On 21 August 2026, Kenya's and East Africa's data protection communities were shocked by news of Rosemary Koech-Kimwatu's death. Kenyan media outlets reported that an autopsy confirmed that she had died by suicide after being found at her home in Ngong.

At the time of her death, Koech-Kimwatu had built a distinguished career in technology law, public policy, and data protection. She served as Head of Data Protection at KCB Group, a role to which she was promoted in June 2023 after joining the company as a Data Protection Officer in June 2022. Before joining KCB, she served as Public Policy Manager at Safaricom PLC from 2020 to 2022.

Koech-Kimwatu also served as a KICTANet board member and Principal of the Kenya School of Internet Governance, and chaired

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From the Editors

Welcome to the fifth issue of **The East African Privacy Monthly** – your regional guide to developments in data protection and privacy. Although August 2026 brought relatively few regional updates, it was marked by the sudden and deeply felt loss of a prominent Kenyan data protection practitioner. Globally, significant regulatory and industry developments also emerged, which we examine in this issue. We are pleased to bring you concise, insightful coverage from across the region and beyond.

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multistakeholder advisory groups for the Kenya and East Africa Internet Governance Forums.

She was a founding member and the first Vice President of the Data Privacy and Governance Society of Kenya (DPGSK), serving from 2023 to 2025. She also served as Chair of the Kenya Bankers Association's Data Protection Working Group from September 2022, as a board member of the Association of Fintechs in Kenya from January 2021, and as a founding member of Nairobi Legal Hackers.

Just four weeks before her death, Koech-Kimwatu was named second runner-up for ISACA Kenya Chapter's SheLeads Tech Icon of the Year Award. Her distinguished career made her a frequent speaker at technology and data governance events. Earlier in 2026, she spoke at the second African GC Night, held in Nairobi on 2 July, and at Kenya's Data Privacy Conference 2026, organised by the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner (ODPC) during Data Privacy Week in January.



Koech-Kimwatu speaking at Kenya's Data Protection Conference 2026 at Pridelnn Paradise Hotel, Mombasa in January

In 2025, ISACA Kenya named Koech-Kimwatu its Data Privacy Guardian of the Year.

Different institutions have mourned her passing, the ODPC eulogized her noting that: ***“She as a passionate Data Protection Champion and valued partner in advancing the culture of privacy and data protection in Kenya. Through her work in the industry, Rosemary was a strong advocate for responsible data protection and a valued supporter of the Office’s mandate. She actively participated in ODPC’s engagements and events, generously, and a champion of the principles of privacy and responsible use of personal data. Her passing is a great loss to the industry and the wider data protection community.”***

DPGSK in their statement noted that: ***“Rosemary played an instrumental role in the establishment of DPSK. She was a respected privacy voice in Kenya’s technology and law community, passionate advocate for the effective implementation of the Data Protection Act, and a generous mentor to many pursuing careers in privacy and data protection.”***

In her honour, KICTANet and Koech-Kimwatu’s family established the Rosemary Koech-Kimwatu Education Fund to support the education and future of her children.

Her contribution to the data protection community will be remembered with honour. May she rest in peace.

East Africa

Uganda

Data Protection Regulator Issues Dates for Filing Compliance Reports.

After approximately a year without annual compliance-report filings by data controllers, processors, and collectors, the Personal Data Protection Office (PDPO) issued a notice on 24th August 2026 reminding all registered entities to prepare and submit their Annual Data Protection and Privacy Compliance Reports by Monday, 23rd November 2026. The notice followed the migration of the office’s services to an improved portal. On 27th August 2026, the PDPO also organised an online training session on filing the report, facilitated by Mr Davis Othieno, Manager of Compliance and Investigations.

DPO Privacy Centre (East Africa) and Tecnolegal Advisory Centre UG Roll Out Foundational Data Protection Course

On 18th August 2026, DPO Privacy Centre (East Africa), together with Tecnolegal Advisory Centre UG, invited applications for a

foundational data protection course titled “Introduction to Data Protection and Privacy in Uganda”. The five-week programme, designed for a Ugandan audience, is free of charge, with an optional certificate available for a fee. It will run from 5th October to 3rd November 2026, and applications close on 18th September. The organisers cited the limited availability of localised training and expect the course to benefit early-career data protection practitioners, with higher-level training for mid-career practitioners planned in due course.

Oral Rounds for the 5th Edition of the Unwanted Witness Privacy Moot Set to Kickoff.

The fifth edition of the Unwanted Witness Privacy Moot is approaching its national rounds. Tanzania’s round will be held on Wednesday, 9th September, at the University of Dar es Salaam; Kenya’s on Tuesday, 15th September, at Daystar University in Nairobi; Rwanda’s on Monday, 21st September, at Hotel Chez Lando in Remera, Kigali; and Uganda’s on 25th September at Uganda Christian University in Mukono. The semifinal

and final rounds, bringing together the strongest teams from across East Africa, will also be held at Uganda Christian University. This year's edition focuses on data protection in digital financial services and fintech

ecosystems. Over the years, the moot has helped develop privacy-aware lawyers and strengthen the next generation of privacy and data protection practitioners.

Kenya

Data Protection Regulator Issues Notice to Data Handlers to Renew their Registration.

The Office of the Data Protection Commissioner (ODPC) issued a notice reminding data controllers and processors with expired registration certificates to renew them promptly. A 14-day renewal window was provided, with a deadline of 11th September 2026. Entities that fail to renew within this period may face enforcement action.

Tanzania

Sandbox Security, Tanzania Privacy Professionals Association (TPPA) and Tanzania Fintech Association launch the Tanzania Digital Trust Outlook.

On 7th August 2026, Sandbox Security, the Tanzania Privacy Professionals Association (TPPA), and the Tanzania Fintech Association launched the inaugural Tanzania Digital Trust Outlook 2026. Developed through the Tanzania Digital Trust Initiative, the report is intended to help shape a more secure, resilient, and trusted digital economy in Tanzania.

The report explores key pillars shaping Tanzania's digital trust landscape, including cybersecurity, data privacy, AI governance, digital payment security, regulatory readiness, professional development, and industry collaboration.

It also highlights the growing importance of treating digital trust as a strategic, board-level priority as organisations navigate rapid digitalisation, emerging AI risks, cyber threats, and evolving regulatory expectations. The

Outlook presents a practical agenda for action, combining sector insights, executive priorities, a digital trust maturity model, and a 90-day action plan.

This inaugural edition marks the beginning of an ongoing effort to bring together government, regulators, financial institutions, fintechs, technology leaders, academia, and industry to strengthen Tanzania's digital ecosystem. (Source: Sandbox Security)

Data Tamasha Africa 2026 a Success

Data Tamasha Africa emerged from the union of DataFest Africa and Data Tamasha and was co-convened by Pollicy and the Tanzania Data Lab (dLab). The three-day event, held at Hotel Verde in Zanzibar from 19th to 21st August, brought together Africa's data practitioners and enthusiasts, citizens, governments, innovators, civil society organisations, creatives, academics, and private-sector representatives. Its aim was to strengthen collaboration, mobilise investment, and support responsible, inclusive, and sustainable data solutions across the continent.

Over three days, participants took part in curated sessions spanning policy, innovation,

culture, and community, including “Data, AI Governance & Innovation for Public Value”, “Safe and Joyful Digital Futures”, “Feminist Innovation and the Digital Economy”, and “The Afrofeminist Data Museum”.

The Guest of Honour was Hon. Mudrik Ramdhan Soraga, Minister for Communication, Information Technology and Innovation in the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar. Other speakers included writer, researcher, and policy analyst Nanjala Nyabola; Farhana Alarakhiya, Chief Data Innovation Officer at Aga Khan University; Noelyn Nassuna of Defenders Protection; Elsa Klarich of WeRobotics; H.E. Andrew Lentz, US Ambassador to Tanzania; and Steve Prager of the Gates Foundation. They contributed through keynote addresses, panel discussions, and lightning talks.

Personal Data Protection Regulator Commences Data User Audits

The Personal Data Protection Commission (PDPC) has announced the commencement of compliance audits for data controllers and data processors across Tanzania under the Personal Data Protection Act, Cap. 44.

The audits will assess registration with the PDPC; the accuracy of registration particulars; compliance with Data Protection Officer duties; the collection, processing, and storage of personal data; security measures; cross-border data transfers; compliance with data subjects’ rights; and other requirements under the Act.

The PDPC has further announced that the next phase will involve visits to data controllers and data processors to further assess compliance.

Across Africa

Nigeria

Data Privacy Lawyers Association of Nigeria Raises Concerns About Regulatory Fees and Compliance Costs

On 17th August 2026, the Data Privacy Lawyers Association of Nigeria (DPLAN) submitted a letter to the Nigeria Data Protection Commission requesting a review of fees associated with regulatory compliance, licensing, accreditation, and professional participation in the data protection ecosystem. DPLAN emphasised that the aggregate cost of entering, operating in, and remaining within the regulated ecosystem may be disproportionately burdensome, particularly for young professionals, small and medium-sized enterprises, emerging Data Protection Officers, consultants, and other participants in the privacy industry.

European Union



Uber Faces Fine of Nearly \$1 Billion Over Automated Driver Suspensions

The Dutch Data Protection Authority has fined Uber €825 million (approximately \$966 million). This is the second-largest GDPR fine on record, behind only the €1.2 billion penalty Ireland's Data Protection Commission levied on Meta in 2023. The regulator investigated complaints that Uber had deactivated drivers' accounts through automated processes without sufficient warning or human oversight.

In a statement, deputy chair Monique Verdier said that the company had "committed serious infringements." "A computer should not make decisions on its own that have [such] major consequences," Verdier said.

Uber, however, argued that most driver suspensions are brief, that no permanent deactivations take place without human review, and that drivers have the ability to appeal. (Dutch regulators said some drivers were permanently deactivated without human review, which Uber disputes.) The company said it will appeal the decision.

This is the fourth fine that the Dutch Data Protection Authority has levied on Uber. Previously fines include €600,000 in 2018, €10 million in 2023, and €290 million in 2024 for transferring European drivers' personal data to the United States without adequate safeguards. (Source: TechCrunch)

Apple Agrees to Tweak How iPhone Apps Ask for Consent to Track

Apple has agreed to redesign the privacy prompts that third-party app developers must show mobile users when seeking consent to use their data for targeted advertising.

The binding commitments, which Apple will apply across the European Union, conclude an investigation launched in mid-2022 by Germany's Federal Cartel Officer ((Bundeskartellamt), which found that Apple's App Tracking Transparency (ATT) framework disadvantaged third-party apps by using more discouraging consent prompts for them than for Apple's own services. The commitments remain binding for seven years, with compliance overseen by an independent monitoring trustee. Apple has four months from service of the decision to implement the changes.

Apple introduced its ATT framework in April 2021, presenting it as a privacy-first measure to give users more control over how their information was used by apps. However, advertising companies argued that the asymmetric design of the prompts favoured Apple's own data practices, leading to complaints to competition authorities across Europe.

Apple will "much more closely" align its consent prompts for third-party apps with those it shows for its own apps, including by removing "possibly discouraging" symbols and wording. The redesigned pop-ups will be neutral.

Developers will also get more room to inform users about their use of people's data for ad targeting – letting them explain why the tracking might be important commercially. They will also be allowed to ask users for their consent every year. (Source: EURACTIV)

United States

Meta Agrees to Settle with US States in Landmark Teen Safety Case

On 27th August 2026, Meta agreed to an \$18 billion (£13.3 billion) settlement with US states and territories to resolve claims that Facebook and Instagram intentionally designed addictive platforms that harmed children's mental health.

District Court Judge Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers of the Northern District of California approved the settlement. The total payout to be made in annual instalments over ten years covers 47

states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands, marking Meta's largest ever child safety settlement.

As part of the settlement, Meta will implement a series of child-safety changes demanded by the states, including default daily time limits, night-time blocks for teen users, and enhanced age-assurance measures to prevent children from accessing the platforms.

Meta has denied any wrongdoing as part of the settlement and said that the payment it agreed to "will be distributed in annual instalments over a 10-year period". (Source: BBC)

DID YOU KNOW?

The GDPR's largest-ever fine remains €1.2 billion against Meta, handed down by Ireland's Data Protection Commissioner in May 2023. Yet with Meta reporting \$134 billion in global revenue that year, the fine amounted to less than 1% of a single year's income, sparking an ongoing debate about whether fines alone are a sufficient deterrent for the world's largest technology companies.



About DPO Privacy Centre (East Africa)

DPO Privacy Centre (East Africa) is a regional hub that supports Data Protection Officers, legal practitioners, and organisations across East Africa in navigating data privacy compliance. We provide training and advisory services, including outsourced DPO services, as well as policy advocacy, awareness initiatives, and publications such as this newsletter. Our aim is to foster a culture of privacy and enrich privacy discussions across East Africa.

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