



For Immediate Release

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Kenya's Health Sector Calls for Smarter AI Regulation as Formal Submission Reaches Senate

HELINA submits public participation memorandum on the Artificial Intelligence Bill, 2026, backed by structured survey of health sector professionals

NAIROBI, KENYA — The Pan African Health Informatics Association (HELINA), through the AI in Health Kenya Community of Practice (AIH-Ke CoP), has formally submitted a memorandum to the Clerk of the Senate as part of the public participation process on the Artificial Intelligence Bill, 2026 (Senate Bills No. 4 of 2026). The submission is grounded in findings from a structured survey of 22 health sector professionals, including clinicians, health informaticians, digital health developers, researchers, and NGO representatives.

The survey, conducted in March and April 2026, represents structured, evidence-based inputs to the Bill's public participation process from Kenya's health and digital health community.

Based on the survey findings, 64% of respondents regularly or occasionally use AI tools in health settings, confirming that AI deployment in Kenya's health sector is already active and widespread. 68% oppose the Bill's blanket classification of all healthcare AI as high-risk, calling instead for a tiered, risk-proportionate framework that distinguishes between clinical AI requiring strict oversight and lower-risk administrative or informational tools. Majority rate patient notification as very or critically important when AI contributes to a clinical decision, yet 68% say patients currently lack adequate information and recourse. Half of the respondents find the Bill's compliance requirements too burdensome for smaller or early-stage Kenyan health technology developers, while 68% say the Bill has the right intentions but requires significant revision to adequately serve Kenya's health sector.

As many respondents noted, Kenya has the talent, the infrastructure, and the ambition to lead Africa in health AI, but regulation that treats an appointment reminder chatbot the same as a clinical diagnostic system is not proportionate; it risks driving local innovators out of the market and creating dependency on imported tools not built for our context or our patients.

HELINA's submission calls on the Senate Standing Committee on Information, Communication and Technology to introduce a tiered risk classification system for health AI, establish the regulatory sandbox as the default innovation pathway for Kenyan-built health tools, strengthen mandatory patient disclosure rights, and ensure the Office of the Artificial Intelligence Commissioner includes meaningful health sector representation. The submission is consistent with the African Union's Continental AI Strategy (2024–2030) and Africa CDC's Digital Transformation Strategy, both of which recognise AI governance and health data governance as interconnected priorities for the continent.



HELINA
Pan African Health Informatics
Association

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About HELINA

The Pan African Health Informatics Association (HELINA) is a continental professional association advancing health informatics and digital health across Africa. The AI in Health Kenya Community of Practice (AIH-Ke CoP) convenes health sector professionals working at the intersection of AI and health in Kenya.

Media Contact:

Mercy Wanjama

communications@helina.africa