

Over 20 Rwandan journalists and media professionals gathered this week to bridge the gap between traditional reporting and the future of technology by mastering Generative AI tools. The training was conducted at the Kigali Paramount Hotel on Tuesday, March 24, 2026. The intensive, half-day workshop was aimed at ensuring that the local media remains competitive and credible in an increasingly digital-first global landscape.

The session, which ran from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM, was far from a standard lecture. It was a high-level collaboration between the Rwanda Media Programme (RMP); implemented by Fojo Media Institute, and the Google News Initiative (GNI).

A diverse cohort of 13 men and 10 women, including editors from TV and print, teachers, and social media influencers, took part in the “newsroom-like” experience.

Led by Google GNI expert Ken Kiunga, they moved through practical exercises using tools like NotebookLM for synthesizing data, Google Trends for tracking story ideas, and specialized tools for deep research.

Ken Kiunga echoed this human-centric view, noting that Generative AI is a tool to empower, not replace, the storyteller. He compared the learning curve to a child’s first stages after birth: “It is like a baby starting with ‘dad’ and ‘mammy’ before they learn to talk. Just as Google has spent 25 years organizing information, journalists must now use these tools to make that information truly useful for their communities.”

Mr. Kiunga emphasized that Google’s mission is aligned with the media’s role in organizing and making information accessible. “That’s why we are so invested in the industry through the Google News Initiative (GNI),” he explained. “We exist to advance quality journalism by providing resources, evolving business models, and bringing editors together to solve the issues affecting the modern media landscape. We are partners in this journey.”

As a participant in the training, Elie Mutangana, from Rwanda Dispatch has seen firsthand how these tools act as a “digital librarian”. He said “In an industry where research used to take days, we can now track trends and find story angles in minutes,”

“These tools are incredibly important for our daily work, but the key is that we

maintain our journalistic ethics while using them, whether we are tracking down what is trending or generating ideas, AI helps us find the signal in the noise while we stay true to our professional values.” Mutangana pointed out.

Marie Anne Dushimimana from Fojo-Rwanda shared her personal approach to the tools, “I talk to AI, asking it to challenge my perspectives, it tries to understand what I mean.”

According to Google and leading global market intelligence firms like Gartner and McKinsey, as of March 2026, it is estimated that between 1.5 and 2 billion people now interact with AI-powered systems worldwide.

While many engage with AI through integrated features like Google Search’s AI Overviews, a dedicated core of 250 to 350 million “active” daily users now rely on these tools for high-level productivity tasks like complex research, coding, and professional writing. This isn’t just an individual trend; global adoption rates show that between 72% and 79% of businesses have already integrated Generative AI into at least one core business function.

### **Ken Kiunga on the AI-Journalism Partnership:**

*“AI is a tool to help journalists write, not to replace them. Our mission at Google is aligned with yours: we both organize information to make it useful. Through the Google News Initiative, we are investing in your industry to advance quality journalism and evolve your business models for the digital age.”*

The workshop concluded with a clear challenge. Ken Kiunga urged every participant to act as an “AI ambassador” by returning to their respective newsrooms and institutions to teach their colleagues.