

By Moses Kigongo

# REFACTORY LAUNCHES DIGITAL JOB BOARD TO BENEFIT UNEMPLOYED UGANDAN YOUTH

Refractory Academy has unveiled its digital job board, an innovation poised to redefine how Ugandan youth access employment in the global digital economy.

The job board was unveiled last Wednesday during the Refractory career expo 2026 at the National ICT hub in Nakawa, Kampala, which was organised under the 10X Programme.

The job board aggregates over 800 job opportunities spanning countries such as the UK, Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya and Egypt, with plans to expand into markets like the United Arab Emirates.

These roles cut across a wide spectrum of digital careers, including software development, data science, product design, cybersecurity, IT support and digital marketing, making it a vital bridge between skilled talent and global demand.

The expo attracted over 1,000 participants, including students, graduates, entrepreneurs and industry leaders, creating a vibrant ecosystem of opportunity and collaboration.

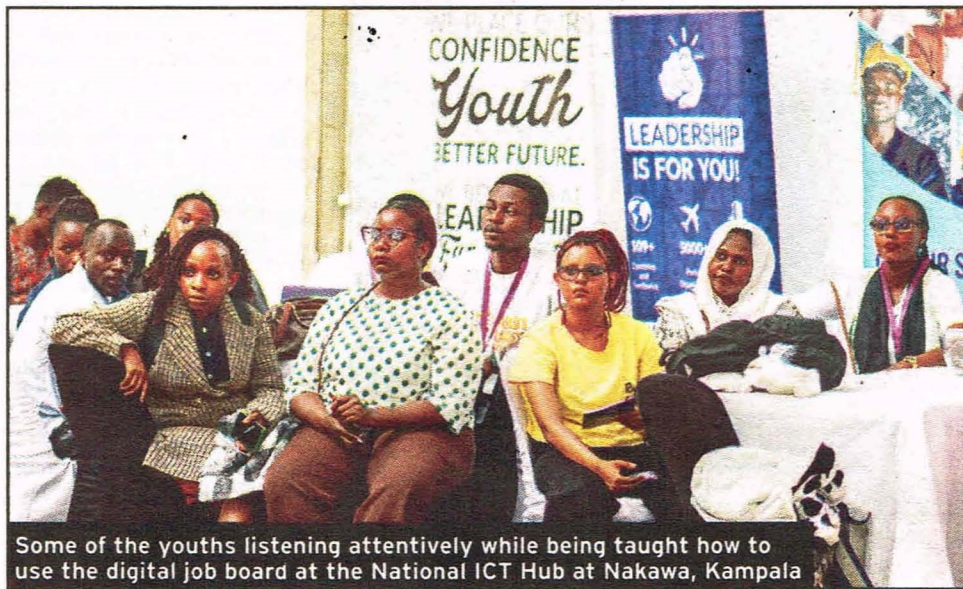
More than 50 companies expressed interest in engaging with talent, while over 120 candidates were shortlisted for interviews, thus demonstrating a shift from traditional career fairs to a results-driven recruitment model.

Leading employers such as SafeBoda, NFT Consult, Q-Sourcing, Aldelia and Bankai Technologies were actively present, conducting interviews, networking with candidates and identifying potential hires across multiple digital disciplines.

Held under the theme *The Industry-Talent Expo*, the event transformed recruitment into a dynamic, real-time engagement process. Participants engaged in live technical demonstrations, speed networking sessions, mentorship conversations and on-the-spot interviews, hence turning the expo into a practical gateway to employment.

For years, one of the biggest challenges facing graduates in Uganda has not just been acquiring skills, but finding meaningful work. Job opportunities are often scattered across multiple platforms, hidden behind networks, or simply out of reach for many young people.

Refractory's digital job board directly confronts this problem by bringing hundreds of curated opportunities into one



Some of the youths listening attentively while being taught how to use the digital job board at the National ICT Hub at Nakawa, Kampala

## BETWEEN THE LINES

◉ The digital job board aggregates over 800 job opportunities spanning countries like UK and South Africa, with plans to expand into markets like the United Arab Emirates.

centralised and accessible platform.

According to the Refractory team lead, Michael Niyitegeka, the platform represents a major milestone in addressing employment

barriers in the digital space. "Finding work has always been fragmented. You are looking at different websites, talking to different people and opportunities come from all directions. What we have done is bring all these opportunities into one place so that our talent can easily access and respond to them," he said.

## TIMELY INTERVENTION

The launch of the digital job board comes at a critical moment when Uganda's digital economy is rapidly expanding, yet many young people remain locked out of opportunities due to limited access, information gaps and structural barriers such as unreliable internet and lack of devices.

Niyitegeka

emphasised that Refractory's mission goes far beyond training. "We exist to skill young people for the digital economy and get them into work. Everything we do is guided by that end goal. We design our programmes with industry, for industry, to ensure that what we teach is exactly what employers are looking for," he elaborated.

## ROAD TO EMPLOYMENT

One of the defining features of Refractory's approach is its emphasis on creating a complete pipeline from skilling to employment. The digital job board is the latest

## INCLUSIVE OPPORTUNITIES

A central pillar of the initiative is inclusivity. Under the 10X Programme being implemented in partnership with Outbox, the United Nations Capital Development Fund, Women in Technology Uganda and the Mastercard Foundation, Refractory is intentionally targeting underserved groups.

The programme aims to train up to 3,800 young women, with a goal of placing at least 70% of them into employment. This is particularly significant given that women remain underrepresented in science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields globally, with participation rates below 20%.

"At Refractory, nearly 70% of our learners are now young women. That is a major shift, and we are proud to be contributing to closing the gender gap in technology," Refractory team lead Michael Niyitegeka said.

Beyond gender inclusion, the initiative also prioritises persons with disabilities and refugees. At least 5% of participants are persons with disabilities, while 3% are refugees hence ensuring that opportunities in the digital economy are accessible to all.

continuously connected to opportunities.

"These events are not just about conversations anymore. We must be intentional about

outcomes. Even if employers do not hire immediately, they leave with a shortlist of candidates they can engage further," Niyitegeka said.



Niyitegeka