

# Uganda puts best foot forward in BPO market

Uganda stands out in outsourcing due to very low labour costs and strong English proficiency, which outweigh weaker digital infrastructure, talent availability, and stability scores in global assessments.

BY BAMUTURAKI MUSINGUZI

Uganda has positioned itself as an emerging force in the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) market on the African continent after ranking 24th globally in the recently published 2026 Ataraxis Global Outsourcing Talent Index by Ataraxis, a Professional Employer Organisation (PEO) based in Idaho, USA.

The Global Outsourcing Talent Index is a data-backed audit of all 193 UN-recognised countries.

It is scored across five variables, including labour cost (52.5 percent); English proficiency (20 percent); talent availability (17.5 percent); digital infrastructure (5.0 percent); and business, legal, and political stability (5.0 percent).

Each country receives a 0 to 100 score per factor, weighted according to its importance in hiring decisions.

The aforementioned weighting, for one, means a country with maximum English proficiency contributes fully to that factor's weight, while a country with low talent availability contributes proportionally less to its overall score.

Scores are based on publicly available data and expert interpretation, drawing from sources such as LinkedIn, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco), EF EPI (English Proficiency Index) and Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), Gallup World Poll, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Ookla, World Bank, World Economic Forum, and the Heritage Foundation. Neutral and comparative, the index is designed to highlight relative strengths across countries rather than label any country as "good" or "bad."

Uganda ranks seventh out of 49 African nations in the index, securing its place as an elite outsourcing destination on the continent. Uganda is, in fact, one of only seven African nations (the African 7) to break into the Global Top 25, outperforming more than 160 other countries globally.



The index shows that Uganda is one of 11 out of the top 50 global outsourcing destinations in Africa PHOTO/ GEOFREY MUMTUMBA

The index shows that Uganda holds a labour cost score of 98/100, the joint-highest score among Africa's top seven outsourcing destinations, shared with Nigeria (first).

Egypt (fourth), and Ethiopia (sixth) complete the top three continental positions.

### Strong performer

With an English proficiency score of 80/100, Uganda ranks eighth in Africa for language skills, ahead of major regional competitors including Egypt (60), Ethiopia (60), Morocco (60), and Algeria (60).

Uganda's total index score of 77.95 narrowly edges out Morocco (77.85), making Uganda a more competitive overall destination than North Africa's primary Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) hub.

Within East Africa, Uganda ranks third behind Kenya (third in Africa)

and Ethiopia (sixth in Africa).

While Kenya leads the region in infrastructure, Uganda and Ethiopia match each other in labour cost (both 98/100), with Kenya close behind at 95/100.

Uganda is one of only two African countries with a labour cost score of 98 and an English proficiency score of 80 or higher; the other is Nigeria, which ranks first in Africa.

Uganda's stability score of 40 equals that of Nigeria and Ghana and ranks higher than Ethiopia (20), the only African country in the global top 25 with a lower stability score than Uganda.

The East African nation ranks higher than 42 other African nations in the index, including emerging tech hubs like Rwanda (28th in Africa) and established markets like Madagascar (16th in Africa).

Uganda's digital infrastructure score of 30/100 is lower than 13+ other African nations, including Kenya (50), Egypt (70), and Morocco (60).

"This indicates that Uganda achieved its top 10 continental status primarily through labour cost competitiveness and English proficiency rather than digital infrastructure," the index notes.

### The rest of Africa

Uganda's talent availability score of 40/100 is lower than every other African country in the global top 30: South Africa scores 70, Nigeria 60, Egypt 70, Ghana 60, Ethiopia 70, Kenya 50, Morocco 60, Algeria 70.

Uganda sits in the bottom third of Africa's elite outsourcing tier on this met-

ric, but high scores in labour cost and English proficiency compensate for its lack of talent availability.

Uganda (24) scores lower overall than Ghana (17) despite sharing identical stability scores of 40, because Ghana outperforms Uganda in English proficiency (90 vs 80) and talent availability (60 vs 40).

Uganda's digital infrastructure score of 30/100, which is almost equal to the average score for the continent (31.3). Uganda's score is identical to that of Nigeria (30) and Ethiopia (30), yet both Nigeria and Ethiopia rank above Uganda overall, driven by Nigeria's English proficiency advantage (90 vs 80) and Ethiopia's talent availability advantage (70 vs 40).

Algeria (28) scores below Uganda (24) in the overall index despite outperforming Uganda in talent availability (70 vs 40).

The gap is driven by Uganda's stronger English proficiency score (80 vs 60), which carries a 20 percent index weight, and the digital infrastructure (Uganda score 30, Algeria only 10).

Zimbabwe (41) scores below Uganda in the overall index despite scoring 100 in English proficiency against a score of 80 for Uganda.

Zimbabwe's overall ranking falls due to its very low talent availability (20), low digital infrastructure (20), and the lowest stability score among Africa's top 11 at just 10/100.

Namibia (69) also scores below Uganda overall, despite outscoring Uganda's English proficiency score (90 versus 80) and surpassing Uganda in stability (60 versus 40).

Uganda outranks Namibia primarily through its labour cost advantage (98 versus 91).

### Regional breakdown

The index shows that 11 out of the top 50 global outsourcing destinations are in Africa, including South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, Egypt, Ghana, Ethiopia, Uganda, Morocco, Algeria, Zimbabwe, and Liberia.

Africa has two of the world's top six outsourcing destinations: South Africa and Nigeria rank 5th and 6th globally, placing both countries in the top 3.11 percent of all 193 evaluated destinations.

South Africa ranks among the most balanced outsourcing markets globally, pairing perfect English proficiency (100/100) with strong talent availability (70/100) and solid business stability (60/100).

Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya each score higher in English proficiency (90) compared to Spain (80), Italy (80), and France (80).

Nigeria has a labour cost score of 98/100, placing it among the top 12 most cost-competitive countries in the entire 193-country index. Of the 19 countries that share this score, Nigeria is the highest-ranked.

Despite ranking 16 spots lower globally, Morocco's Talent Availability score (60) is identical to Romania's score (10), offering the same level of talent scalability at a far lower operational cost.

## ABOUT THE INDEX

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### Doing well.

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– Ataraxis Global Outsourcing Talent Index